THE COMMANDMENTS EXPLAINED

REV. A. DEVINE

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THE COMMANDMENTS EXPLAINED.

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THE COMMANDMENTS EXPLAINED

According to the Teaching and Doctrine of the Catholic Church

BY THE
REV. ARTHUR DEVINE
Passionist
AUTHOR OF 'THE CREED EXPLAINED,' 'CONVENT LIFE,' ETC.

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PREFACE.

It is not necessary to explain the plan or method followed in this volume on the Commandments, which is very clear and simple, as may be seen by the contents. It may be well, however, by a few introductory sentences, to give the author's own views of the aim and purpose of the work in order that more may not be expected from it than he intended, and that the readers may, at the outset, understand the extent and limitations of the instructions given in the several parts and chapters. A work treating of the Commandments is, of necessity, a work of Moral Theology and of Moral Philosophy at the same time. As a work of Moral Theology, it has for its subject-matter all the obligations of Christians, natural and supernatural. It appeals concerning both these classes of duties to Scripture and Tradition and the teaching of the Church. It appeals also, and largely, to reason regarding the former class, and it uses reason in deducing and developing the latter, as well as the former. It takes its materials from all departments of Divine and human law. As a work of Moral Philosophy it confines itself to merely natural sources of knowledge and natural grounds of argument in dealing with the moral law. These two cannot be antagonistic; that is to say, Moral Philosophy cannot teach a doctrine that may be at variance

with Christian principles, as no such doctrine can be true in Philosophy and false in Theology. Theology, which has direct and express recourse to revelation and ecclesiastical authority, is the highest branch of sacred science. This idea should be kept in view when reading and examining the several points bearing on our obligations to God and man contained under the Commandments.

Secondly, the work as one of Moral Theology is not controversial, and it ought not to be; that is to say, it does not concern itself about disputes on moral points between Catholics and non-Catholics. The Moral Theologian as such is satisfied with the decision of a Pope or a General Council, and he need not take the trouble of vindicating it. 'Nay,' as the Rev. E. O'Reilly, S.J., has said, 'even less solemn Roman answers and solutions are accepted as practically sufficient to settle moral questions.'

Thirdly, the object and end of a work of this kind is to guide Christian people as to their conduct, and, therefore, unless principles and doctrines are made to reach the details of human actions, even of ordinary every-day actions, considered as good or bad in the eyes of God, its aim is not attained. No man, however intelligent, can be able, no matter how well furnished with the principles and doctrines of this science, to settle for himself and for others all that needs settling. It will be necessary to study not only the principles and leading propositions, but their application also, not indeed to all possible circumstances, for this would be impracticable, but to a great variety of circumstances, partly in order to be prepared for those circumstances when they occur, partly in order to acquire a facility in dealing with details.

These ideas are taken from one of the Rev. E. O'Reilly's Theological Essays, and served as my guide in dealing with moral details and particular cases that might be considered

by some too minute and unnecessary. That is the portions of the work that might come under the term *casuistry*. To avoid the invidious sense that has been attached to that word, I shall here give its real meaning in the words of that learned theologian: 'The real meaning of casuistry is something innocent enough. It implies the study of *cases*—a useful and necessary study. But an invidious sense has been attached to the word, pretty much as has occurred with reference to the phrase *special pleading*, which denotes a most legitimate incident of English law proceedings, but is occasionally made to signify a sort of chicanery. Casuistry is taken for something similar. The notion involved in this secondary sense of casuistry is, either that all close investigation of moral questions as applied to practice is unnecessary and noxious, or that this investigation, though perhaps in itself useful, is commonly carried to excess and applied to bad purposes. Neither notion is correct. In the first place, it is clear that the moral obligations of men regard particular circumstances, and are affected and varied by particular circumstances. This is illustrated in courts of law, where independently of mere technicalities—which, however, are not to be despised—the most refined and complicated reasonings are employed about the substance of rights and wrongs. It is illustrated, too, from the views taken by experienced men of business and by ordinary citizens concerning fairness and unfairness, duties and liabilities. Now if the obligations exist, it cannot be superfluous to endeavour to ascertain them. Nor can this be mischievous if the work is rightly gone about. There is no need of all men being theologians, as there is no need of all being lawyers; but it is most desirable that there should be some to whom recourse may be had in cases of difficulty. As to excess or perverseness in *casuistical* pursuits, such faults may occasionally occur, but they are far from

common and scarcely ever intentional. It is easy to laugh at what are called fine drawn distinctions. But it so happens that those who indulge most in this ridicule know little of the subject, and are not commonly remarkable for their observance of obvious moral obligations.'[1]

As to the method adopted in giving the explanations, I may say that I have made use of the form of familiar instruction, and it has been my endeavour to attach importance, as Catholics always do, to the constant reiteration of the same lessons of faith and practice, even though it may be said that this is calculated to produce a certain sense of sameness, and that we want something brilliant, startling, and sensational even in our religious writings, and that education has altered matters in our times. To this I may reply, in the words of Dom Francis Aidan Gasquet, O.S.B. :

'In point of fact, however, no amount of education really affects these truths, still less does it advance them. The only question is how best the truths of religion are impressed upon the mind.' That learned writer goes on to say : 'I must own to a belief that at the present day our Catholic people have not that clear understanding nor that firm grasp of the great simple truths of their religion which they ought to have. Nor need we be astonished if this be the case ; for is there much exaggeration in the statement that after leaving school (many) Catholics now seldom receive regular and systematic instruction upon the elements of faith and practice during the rest of their lives? Here we are living in the midst of Protestants, and I would ask if, when the whole nation was Catholic and had been so for generations, when the very atmosphere which Englishmen breathed was impregnated with Catholicity, it was considered necessary never to cease repeating instructions of what, for lack of a better expression, I may call "the Penny

[1] 'Theological Essays,' chap. ix.

Catechism type," it can be safe in these days of vagueness and latitudinarianism to rely—I may say exclusively—for the teaching of our people on the formality of set sermons.'

F. Gasquet says that he does not wish unduly to obtrude these observations, and neither do I. But for pastoral work and its success in all its branches, we all know that after the ministration of the Sacraments, the next great duty is to teach and direct the members of the Church in all matters of faith and practice. There can be no better form of teaching for preserving the faith of Catholics and directing them in the way of God's commandments, nor for gaining souls to the Church of Christ, than regular and systematic instruction upon the elements of Christian faith and practice, as contained in the Creed and the Ten Commandments.

I know that books can never do the work of oral teaching and instruction; they may serve as a great help to it, and in some cases be a substitute for it. Many will not come to hear who may be inclined to read, and those who attend sermons and instructions usually read good books; and as my oral teaching cannot reach very many, it was my earnest wish in writing and publishing the following instructions, to tell my readers those same things that I would gladly teach them orally from the pulpit or platform, had I the opportunity of doing so.

In treating of the various subjects, references are given to works, quoted as far as I thought it necessary, and in some cases as far as it was possible to verify quotations from notes taken at different periods for scholastic purposes. It was quite unnecessary in most cases to refer to the ordinary standard works of Moral Theology and standard English works treating on the same subject, as they are but repetitions of each other in different form, except for an occasional statement admitting of diversity of opinion.

There are numerous references and quotations from the Sacred Scriptures, and it is hoped that they will be found correct and exact. Every care has been given to this item as the work was passing through the press, so as to save the inconvenience and loss of time always entailed by inaccuracy with regard to these references.

St. Joseph's Retreat.
Highgate,
Feast of the Precious Blood, July, 1897.

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1. In order to be saved, it is not enough to have been baptized, and to believe the truths contained in the Creed; it is also necessary to observe the law of God.

Religion is made up, not only of truths to be believed, but also of precepts to be observed, which two things taken, together constitute Christian morality.

The word 'morality' is derived from two Latin words, *morum lex*—that is, the law of morals. Morality is, there-

fore, the doctrine or system of moral duties, or the duties of men towards God and towards one another.

Between dogmas and morals there is a very close connection. They are the two elements forming a whole, which is religion. Take away religion from morality, and you will have only abstract theories, without any real or serious influence on the actions or lives of men. Take away dogma, and you will only have a code of laws without a legislator. That which is spoken of by pretending philosophers as moral independence is a kind of morality without God. This is nothing more than a chimera, for without God we cannot conceive either an authority to impose a law, or a power to enforce or to sanction it. By nature all men are equal, and one cannot impose obligations on another unless we suppose a higher law and a higher authority. Human force is limited, and can offer only a partial guarantee to effect the observance of laws. It can only reach transgressors when they are seen and found out. Such a system would be one of entire servitude, which could never extend to all our actions, and which could not touch the heart. In such a case, the idea of duty and the idea of right would entirely disappear; so that without God we cannot conceive any moral system.

Both reason and experience lead us to this conclusion. It is also the Gospel teaching. Our Divine Saviour, side by side with revealed truth, has given us maxims of Christian morality and conduct. In sending His Apostles to announce His religion to the world, He said to them: *Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*[1]

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

2. Dogmas and morals are therefore so closely united that it is necessary not only to believe all revealed truths, but also to observe all the commandments. Faith alone is not sufficient. This has been defined by the Council of Trent. 'If anyone should say that a justified man is not bound to the observance of the commandments of God . . . as if the Gospel were a clear and absolute promise of eternal life, without the condition of the observance of the commandments, let him be anathema.[1]

A Christian is one who, being baptized, professes the faith of Jesus Christ and observes His law. It is to him who observes the law that Christ has promised life, according to His own words: *If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments.*[2] To believe what is of faith and to observe the whole law is what every Christian must do in order to be saved.

Now, it is the law of God which I endeavour to explain in the following instructions on the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments of God. And in order to elucidate matters, it is necessary to explain beforehand some questions affecting laws in general, and the Divine law in particular. We have, therefore, to explain:

(1) The nature and division of law.

(2) The obligation of law.

(3) The motives for observing the precepts of the law, and the manner of doing so.

3. (1) The word 'law' comes from the Latin word *legere*, to read, because it is given that man may read or be instructed in his duties. St. Thomas derives it rather from *ligare*, to bind, because it is, as it were, a tie or bond attaching an obligation to us. This seems to be the correct derivation of the word, because in this a law is distinguished from a counsel, that the former imposes on us an obligation. It is

[1] Sess. VI., Can. 19 20. [2] St. Matt. xix. 17.

the external and remote rule of human actions—a rule prescribed by the supreme power for regulating the actions of men. It is defined by St. Thomas: 'A permanent rule prescribed as obligatory by the supreme power of a state for the common good.'[1] Promulgation is required in order that a law be binding—that is, it should be publicly notified to the community, although its obligation does not depend on its acceptance by the people or the community.

(2) In general, laws are divided into two great classes, Divine and human. Human laws are subdivided into ecclesiastical and civil. Of these we do not now treat. The Divine law is divided into *eternal*, *natural*, and *positive*.

(3) The *eternal* law is the dictate of the Divine mind, which prescribes or lays down what rational creatures are to do and to avoid. It is nothing else, according to St. Augustine, than the Divine and uncreated reason—the eternal will, which ordains the natural order of things, and forbids them to be disturbed or violated. I have here limited its meaning to rational beings, inasmuch as man is the only free being on earth, and he alone has the power of conforming himself to God's eternal law or violating it. Law in its more general and comprehensive sense may indeed be applied to all actions, whether animate or inanimate, rational or irrational; but here, as it is understood, I am treating of moral actions, and the rules prescribed for them by the Creator.

From all eternity there was in God the idea of the Divine mind, according to which creatures when they would come into existence should be directed and regulated; and it is in this sense the law is called *eternal*, although it only came into existence in time, after the creation, when it was promulgated to rational beings.

[1] 'Ordinatio rationis obligationem inducens ad bonum commune ab eo qui curam communitatis habet promulgata.'

Every other law is derived from the eternal law as from an exemplary cause, inasmuch as it is the type and pattern of every law, and from it as from an efficient cause, inasmuch as all legislative power is from the eternal law, or, in other words, from God.

(4) The *natural law*, or the *law of nature*, is the eternal law as it is impressed upon man's reason, or it is the dictate of our creative reason prescribing what we should do or avoid; because God, when He created man and endued him with free will, laid down certain immutable laws of human nature, whereby that free will is to be regulated and restrained according to the dictate of natural reason. This law is also called right reason—the light of reason. It is that which enables us to distinguish between good and bad, just and unjust, vice and virtue. This law is a reflex of the *eternal law*, and is one with it, in the sense that they both prescribe the same thing; but they differ in this, that the *eternal law* is in God, and the natural law in the created mind. This may be illustrated by the example of an image which is the same in the stamp and in the thing stamped. St. Paul refers to this law when he says: *For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law; these having not the law, are a law to themselves: who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also defending one another.*[1]

The natural law, though one in itself, contains many precepts or principles, of which there are three classes—namely, *primary*, *secondary*, and *remote*.

The *primary principles* dictate that we should worship God, that we should live honestly, should hurt nobody, and should render to everyone his due. To these Justinian has reduced the whole doctrine of law.

[1] Rom. ii. 14, 15.

The *secondary principles* are those which may be easily deduced from the first, such as those contained in the commandments of God; and the *remote* are the precepts which are deduced from these by the light of natural reason, or those which are with difficulty deduced from the first principles of that law.

The *natural law* was promulgated for the human race from the beginning by the revelation made to our first parents, according to the words of Ecclesiasticus: *God created man of the earth, and made him after His own image. . . . He created of him a helpmate like to himself: He gave them counsel, and a tongue, and eyes, and ears, and a heart to devise, and He filled them with the knowledge of understanding. He created in them the science of the spirit, He filled their heart with wisdom, and showed them both good and evil. . . . Moreover, He gave them instructions, and the law of life for an inheritance. He made an everlasting covenant with them, and showed them His justice and judgments, and their ears heard His glorious voice, and He said to them, Beware of all iniquity. And He gave to every one of them commandment concerning his neighbour.*[1]

Practically speaking, no one can be invincibly ignorant of the first principles or precepts of the natural law, inasmuch as they are clearly impressed on the mind of everyone.

As to the secondary principles, no one can be practically invincibly ignorant of them, unless in the case of some illiterate and inexperienced persons, and in these, ignorance of the precepts can only be for a short time, and, under some circumstances, apparently justifiable and honest.

As to the more remote principles and conclusions of the natural law, invincible ignorance may be found both in the man who acts and even in the man who teaches, as clearly stated by St. Alphonsus.[2]

[1] Ecclus. xvii. 1 *et seq.* P. 171.

The law of nature, as it is a necessary law affecting only those things that are intrinsically and of their own nature good or bad, cannot be changed or admit of dispensation, not even by God, who cannot contradict Himself.

In many cases, however, the matter about which the natural law prescribes an obligation may be changed in such a way that, under altered circumstances, the object may cease to come under the law of nature.

(5) *The Divine Positive Law.*—This is twofold—the old and the new law, or the Mosaic and the Evangelical law.

(6) *The Old Law, or the Law delivered to Moses.*—The natural law, having become through the passions of men obscured and nearly forgotten, God deigned anew to manifest His will to men through Moses on Mount Sinai, about 2,500 years after the creation of the human race. He caused it to be engraved on tablets of stone, as men were no longer able to read it in their depraved hearts.

The precepts of the old law were threefold: 1. *Moral*, which prescribed to men that which was already contained in the law of nature, their religious and social duties—in other words, their duties to God and to each other. 2. The *Ceremonial*, which prescribed the external rites and ceremonies to be observed by the Jews in the Divine worship. 3. The *Judicial*, which prescribed the manner of administering justice amongst the Jewish people.

The *moral* law was contained in the precepts of the Decalogue, and, as it was made up of the secondary precepts of the law of nature, it was binding on all people and at all times.

The *ceremonial* and *judicial* precepts of the old law were binding only on the Israelites and on proselytes, or those from amongst the Gentiles who embraced Judaism and submitted to the rite of circumcision.

It is of faith that God was the Author of the old law, and

it was therefore good and holy; but, like every other law, it was often made the occasion of sin by its abuse.

(7) The new or Evangelical law is no other than the *old moral* law, renewed, approved, and perfected by Jesus Christ, according to His own declaration: *Do not think that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

The new law was given by Christ to all men and for all time. Although the moral law is the same, yet we must know that Christ also gave two other classes of precepts—namely, *sacramental* and precepts of faith. These, unlike the *ceremonial* and *judicial* precepts of the old law that affected only the Jews, bind all men, and will remain always in force. And, again, the old law did not give grace (although grace was given in the old dispensation by virtue of the new): the new law does give grace through the Sacraments.

The old law, as to its ceremonial part, was only a shadow and figure of the new; hence it ceased when this came into force.

The new law began to be solemnly promulgated, and to oblige, on the Day of Pentecost, for the Jews then dwelling in Jerusalem, and afterwards gradually throughout the world.

The old law began to fail during the lifetime of Christ, although then it was obligatory on the Jews; it ceased or died at the time of the death of Christ. It became deadly or unlawful about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Then the synagogue was buried, and the *legalia* could no longer be observed without sin.

4. *The Obligation of Laws.*—It is necessary to remember that I speak here only of the natural and the Divine positive law.

(1) To the natural law all men are subject. An act against the natural law, *e.g.*, blasphemy, impurity, is always sinful; at least, it is always a *material sin*, because the law always and necessarily exists for all.

To the Divine positive law all are subject, to whom that law is directed. The Jews were subject to all the precepts of the old law, and all men are subject to the new or Evangelical law.

(2) The precepts of the Decalogue are therefore binding on all, not only Christians, but Mohammedans, Jews, and pagans.

These precepts are just and reasonable. They are possible, and even easy of observance, with the help of God's grace.

The precepts are just and reasonable because they have God as their Author. He is the Legislator. Their justice must be recognised, their convenience must be felt, their utility experienced, and their wisdom admired. The spirit of the Christian dispensation is that of moderation. It tempers severity with moderation and excludes excess in both, and in all things it recommends sobriety and wisdom, according to the words of Ecclesiastes: *Be not over just, and be not more wise than is necessary, lest thou become stupid.*[1]

(3) The commandments are possible, and even sweet and easy of observance. To pretend that the fulfilment of the Christian law is impossible would be impious and blasphemous, inasmuch as it would be imputing to God the injustice of commanding us to do something above our strength. On the contrary, the law of God is a law of love, according to the words of Christ: *If anyone love Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him.*[2] And St. Paul tells us that the *fulfilling of the law is love.*[3] 'How,' says St. Augustine, 'can it be impossible for a man to love—to love his Creator, who has bestowed so many favours upon him; to love a Father so full of tenderness, and to love his own flesh and blood in his brethren?' The saints, in fact, kept the law, and it is through its observance they

[1] Eccles. vii. 17. [2] St. John xiv. 23 [3] Rom. xiii. 10.

are now in heaven. Faith and experience teach us that the observance of the Ten Commandments and of the Christian law is not impossible. To maintain the contrary would be both impious and heretical, as declared by the teaching of the Council of Trent.[1] It is not only possible to observe the law, but sweet and easy, as our Saviour Himself tells us: *Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek, and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light.*[2] St. John very formally tells us: *This is the charity of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not heavy.*[3]

(4) We must not, however, labour under any delusion when it is taught that to keep the commandments is possible and easy. It is true that this is the case, but with the help of the grace of God. It is narrated in the Gospel that one day a young man came to our Saviour and asked Him the question: *What shall I do to be saved?* and Christ answered him: *Keep the commandments;* and that the young man had done, though perhaps not without difficulty. The Apostles also seemed to have taken the view that the observance of the commandments was not easy, and they said once to our Lord: *Who, then, can be saved?* Our Saviour in His goodness explained the matter to them. Man, left to himself, is not able to fulfil the whole wealth on account of weakness of his fallen nature, but he can easily do this with the help of God. *With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*[4] These words should not be forgotten. Whilst they give us confidence in God, they fill us with diffidence in ourselves, and enable us to say with St. Paul: *I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me.*[5] We can keep the commandments if we wish to do so

[1] Sess. VII., de justif, can. 18. [2] St. Matt. xi. 29, 30.
[3] 1 John v. 3. [4] St. Matt. xix. 25, 26. [5] Phil. iv. 13.

sincerely, because God always grants us the necessary grace to observe His law, and His grace enables our will not only to fulfil all the duties imposed by the law, but also makes us experience pleasure and happiness in their observance. All the difficulty in keeping the commandments arises from the evil dispositions of our nature. The light of the sun is beautiful and enjoyable, but hurtful to weak eyes; food, which is relished in a state of health, is disagreeable when one is sick.

(5) In treating of the obligation of the Divine law, we must, as in all other laws, distinguish between an *affirmative* and a *negative* precept. An *affirmative* precept obliges always, but not at all times and every moment (*obligat semper sed non ad semper*); that is, it must be fulfilled at prescribed times, such as the obligation of sanctifying Sunday, of making acts of faith, hope, and charity; but these acts, although binding always during life, do not bind at each moment. A *negative* precept obliges always and at all times—that is, at every moment, as, for example, not to steal, not to blaspheme. *Obligat semper et pro semper.*

We have, furthermore, to notice that laws, even the Divine laws, bind under grave sin in a grave matter, but only under venial sin in a *light* matter. It is an error to suppose that every violation of the Divine law is a morta sin, because this law may be violated only in small things, as, for example, to steal a small amount, to tell a simple lie.

The kind or quality of obligation involved in a law may be judged by the virtue on account of which the law was made. Thus, the obligation of adoring God is by the virtue of religion, the obligation of fasting is by the virtue of temperance, etc., and the transgression of the law and the nature of the sin may be judged also according as it is opposed to one or other of the virtues.

5. *The Motives that should lead us to keep the Law of*

God.—The motives for keeping the law are, that it is (1) our duty, and (2) our interest to do so.

(1) Our *duty*. It is the duty of a servant to obey his master, the duty of a subject to obey his king, and the duty of a child to obey his father. Now, God is our Master, our King, and our Father. He is more; He is our God and Creator, and hence, in promulgating His law by the words, *I am the Lord your God*, He shows that He has authority over men, and the right to command them.

(2) Our *interest*. The second motive for keeping the law is that it is our interest to do so, because it means our happiness here and hereafter.

Moses on the part of God enumerates the miseries and punishments that would befall the Israelites if they kept not the law,[1] and he also enumerates the blessings that would result from its observance: *Now, if thou wilt hear the voice of the Lord thy God, to do and keep all His commandments, which I command thee this day, the Lord thy God will make thee higher than all the nations that are on the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon thee and overtake thee; yet so if thou hear His precepts. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the droves of thy herds, and the folds of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy barns, and blessed thy stores. Blessed shalt thou be coming in and going out. . . . The Lord will raise thee up to be a holy people to Himself, as He swore to thee: If thou keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways*, etc.

All these temporal blessings were suitable to the state and taste of the Israelites, and they were a figure of those more perfect and spiritual blessings which God proposes to and bestows upon Christians. These spiritual blessings

[1] Deut xxvii., xxviii.

regard the future life, as Christ our Saviour clearly taught: *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.*[1] The observance of the commandments will obtain for us the following advantages: (1) To be saved from hell. (2) Blessings for body and soul here—namely, health, long life, so far as these may be of use for our salvation, and peace of conscience. (3) Hereafter the beatitude of heaven, which should make us exclaim with the royal prophet: *The law of the Lord is unspotted, converting souls. . . . The judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves. More to be desired than gold and precious stones; and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. For Thy servant keepeth them, and in keeping them there is great reward.*[2]

6. *The Manner of Observing the Law of God.*—It is necessary to observe the law *entirely*, *always*, and *sincerely*.

(1) *Entirely.*—In order to avoid evil and do good, it is necessary to be in the grace of God. Now, one cannot be in the state of grace unless he keeps the whole of the law. By one grave violation of any of the commandments the grace of God is lost; and whilst in that state of sin, the keeping of the other commandments cannot avail for the obtaining of eternal life, as St. James distinctly teaches us: *Now whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all.*[3]

(2) *Always.*—That is, the law of God binding at all times, even to the end of the world. It binds us during our whole lives and under all circumstances. God is always our Lord; under every circumstance of life He retains His power and right to command, and whatever He commands is infinitely just and infinitely wise. We should therefore keep before us the words of Tobias: *All the days of thy life have God in thy mind; and take heed thou never consent to sin nor transgress the commandments of the Lord our God.*[4] We should

[1] St. Matt. xix. 17. [2] Ps. xviii. 8 *et seq.* [3] St. Jas. ii. 10. [4] Tob. iv. 6.

also remember the exhortation to the love of God and obedience to His law given in Deuteronomy: *Hear, O Israel, and observe to do the things which the Lord hath commanded thee, that it may be well with thee. . . . Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart: and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising. And thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand, and they shall be and shall move between thy eyes. And thou shalt write them in the entry, and on the doors of thy house.*[1]

(3) *Sincerely.*—Finally, the law should be observed with sincerity—that is, with pleasure and with pure motives. The Lord, says St. Paul, loves a cheerful giver. The pure motives which should be before the mind in keeping the commandments are the glory of God and the good of our fellow-creatures. To observe the law in the true Christian spirit means an observance, not for particular human ends or advantages, and not through a purely servile fear of chastisements, but an observance through charity, through the love of God and our neighbour. It is in charity that all the Christian religion consists. It is that which distinguishes the true Christian; it is that which makes him truly a child of God, a member of the mystical body of Christ, the living temple of the Holy Spirit, an heir and citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Without charity all is useless, and profits nothing to salvation. Neither faith, nor miracles, nor the most exalted gifts, nor the most generous alms, nor even martyrdom in the midst of flames, can profit us anything towards salvation without charity, or the love of God.

[1] Deut. vi. 3 *et seq.*

If I have not charity I am nothing, and it profiteth me nothing.

God, then, having created us rational creatures, we cannot be exempt from paying Him the due tribute of adoration and obedience. We should therefore meditate continually on the love of God, after the example of the psalmist, who said to God: *All the day Thy law is my meditation.* Let us imitate him with invincible fidelity, each one saying with him: *Juravi et statui custodire judicia justitiæ tuæ.* To enable us to do this, let us beg of God that His grace may be always with us: *Justificationes tuas custodiam non me derelinquas usquequaque.*

INTRODUCTION.

PART II.

THE DECALOGUE, OR THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

1 The meaning of the Decalogue.
2. When, where, by whom, and to whom given.
3. The circumstances under which the Ten Commandments were promulgated.
4. The number and division of the commandments.
5. Those written on the first and those on the second table of stone.
6. The summary of the commandments into two.
7. The principal analogies between the Mosaic and Evangelical laws.
8. The differences.
9. The principles of interpretation. (1) When any duty is prescribed, the contrary sin is forbidden. (2) They must be interpreted according to the spirit of the law. (3) Love is the fulfilling of the law. (4) Reasons attached to four of them for the observance.
10. Illustration : The traveller on his way to a magnificent city.

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1. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.
4. Honour thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

THE Catechism of the Council of Trent in its introduction to this chapter tells us: that the Decalogue is an epitome

of the entire law of God is the recorded opinion of St. Augustine (Quæs. 140 super Exod.). The Lord, it is true, had uttered many things for the instruction and guidance of His people, yet two tables only were given to Moses; they were made of stone, and were called the *tables of the testimony*, and were to be deposited in the ark of the covenant, and on them, if minutely examined and well understood, will be found to hinge whatever else is commanded by God. Again, these Ten Commandments are reducible to two—the love of God and of our neighbour, on *which depend the whole law and the prophets.*[1]

It is our duty now to examine these Ten Commandments and to understand their obligation. In this chapter we have to consider:

1. The meaning of the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments.
2. When, where, by whom, and to whom, they were given.
3. The circumstances of their promulgation.
4. Their division according to the two tables on which they were written.

1. 'Decalogue' (δεκάλογος) is derived from the Greek δεκα, ten, and λογὸς, word. It means the ten words, or the ten principal commandments of God. It is the term applied first by the Greek Fathers to designate the Ten Commandments, or *Ten Words*, and now commonly employed in theological language for the same purpose. In the original Septuagint version of the Scriptures we have always οἱ δεκα λογοὶ, *the ten words.*

2. The Decalogue was given in the third month after the Israelites had departed out of the land of Egypt,[2] and on the third day of the month God spoke all these words through Moses to the people in the desert at Mount Sinai. It is said to have been delivered by Angels, but God Himself is its Author.

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 40. [2] Exod. xix. 1.

The precepts of the Decalogue were not delivered as new laws, but rather as a renewal or development of the law of nature; 'its Divine light, which,' as the Catechism of the Council of Trent says, 'was obscured and almost extinguished by the crimes and perversity of man, shines forth in this celestial code with increased and renovated splendour.'

3. The circumstances under which the Ten Commandments were promulgated are narrated in the Book of Exodus, from which I take the following summary.

(1) And now the third day was come, and the morning appeared: and behold thunders began to be heard, and lightning to flash, and a very thick cloud to cover the mount . . .[1] And all Mount Sinai was on a smoke: because the Lord was come down upon it in fire, and the smoke arose from it as out of a furnace: and all the mount was terrible. And the sound of the trumpet grew by degrees louder and louder, and was drawn out to a great length: Moses spoke, and God answered him.[2]

(2) The people sanctified against the third day, and, having their garments washed and having abstained from sensual pleasures, stood at the foot round about.

(3) And Moses went down to the people and told them all.

(4) And Moses went up again into the mountain. And he was there forty days and forty nights,[3] and he fasted and obtained the Decalogue written on tables of stone.

(5) Whilst Moses was remaining on the mount, the people adored the molten calf, Aaron conniving at their conduct.[4]

(6) When Moses descended from the mount and came nigh the camp, he saw the calf and the dancers, and being very angry, he threw the tables (of the law) out of his hand, and broke them at the foot of the mount.

(7) And 23,000 of the men were killed, and the rest of

[1] Exod. xix. 16.
[2] *Ibid.* 18, 19.
[3] *Ibid.* xxiv. 18.
[4] *Ibid.* xxxii. 1.

the people repenting, Moses ascended the mountain again. And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water, and he wrote upon the tables the ten words of the covenant.[1]

(8) And finally when he came down from Mount Sinai he held the two tables of the testimony, and he knew not that his face was horned from the conversation of the Lord. And he spoke to the children of Israel all things that had been commanded him.[2]

The Ten Commandments are contained in the twentieth chapter of Exodus. God spoke them (probably through an Angel) to the people in words, before they were written on tables of stone. But the people when they heard the voice of God were impelled by fear to retire to a distance from the mount, and urged Moses to solicit the great Jehovah not to speak to them personally, lest they should die. They said to Moses: *Speak thou to us, and we will hear; let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die.*[3] Moses was accepted as their mediator, and advanced into the cloud to speak with God, as we have said above. Then was also prescribed a code of civil and social as well as the religious laws, all of which were written in a book, and called the Book of the Covenant. The same Ten Commandments were repeated and explained in Deuteronomy,[4] with slight differences in the wording and in the form, but substantially the same.

The words recorded in Exodus are precisely those which were uttered from Sinai and written upon the tables of stone. In Deuteronomy Moses gives another account of the transaction, speaking to the Jews in a hortative manner. 'It is obvious that the differences [between the two narratives, that of Exodus and that of Deuteronomy] leave the main body or substance of the Decalogue untouched;

[1] Exod. xxxiv. 28.
[2] *Ibid.*, 29, 34
[3] Exod. xx. 19.
[4] Deut. v. 6-21.

not one of them affects the import and bearing of a single precept; nor, if viewed in their historical relation, can they be regarded as involving in any doubt or uncertainty the verbal accuracy of the form prescribed in Exodus. We have no reason to doubt that the words there recorded are precisely those which were uttered from Sinai and written upon the tables of stone. In Deuteronomy Moses gives a revised account of the transaction, using throughout certain freedoms, as speaking in a hortative manner, and from a more distant point of view; and while he repeats the commandments as those which the Lord had spoken from the midst of the fire, and written upon tables of stone,[1] he yet shows in his very mode of doing it that he did not aim at an exact production of the past, but wished to preserve to some extent the form of a rehearsal.'[2]

The commandments were written on tables of stone, and were kept in the Ark of the Covenant; of no other words could it be said that they were written as those were written, engraved on the tables of stone, not as originating in man's contrivance or sagacity, but by the power of the Eternal Spirit by the finger of God.[3]

4. *The Number and Division of the Commandments according to the Two Tables of the Law.*—The number ten was, we can hardly doubt, itself significant to Moses and the Israelites. The received symbol then and at all times of completeness, it taught the people that the law of Jehovah was perfect.[4] The fact that they were written, not on one, but on two tables . . . taught men the great divisions of duties towards God and towards our neighbour which we recognise as the groundwork of the true moral system. In what way the Ten Commandments were to be divided has, however, been a matter of much controversy. At least four

[1] Deut. v. 22. [2] Fairbarn's 'Bible Dictionary'—'Decalogue.'
[3] Exod. xxxi. 18; xxxii. 16. [4] Ps. xviii. 8.

distinct arrangements present themselves, thus summarized in Smith's 'Concise Dictionary of the Bible' from the Protestant point of view: '(1) In the received teaching of the Latin Church, resting on that of St. Augustine, the first table contained three commandments; the second, the other seven. It involved, however, and in part proceeded from, an alteration in the received arrangement. What we know as the first and second were united, and consequently the Sabbath law appeared at the close of the first table as the third, not as the fourth commandment. The completeness of the number was restored in the second table by making a separate (the ninth) command of the precept, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," which with us forms part of the tenth. (2) The familiar division referring the first four to our duty towards God, and the six remaining to our duty towards man, is on ethical grounds simple and natural enough. (3) A modification of the first has been adopted by later Jewish writers. Retaining the combination of the first and second commandments of the common order they have made a new "word" of the opening declaration, "I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage," and thus have avoided the necessity of the subdivision of the tenth. (4) Rejecting these three, there remains that recognised by the older Jewish writers, Josephus and Philo . . . which places five commandments in each table, and thus preserves the *pentad* and *decad* grouping which pervades the whole code. A modern jurist would perhaps object that this places the fifth (or by Catholic arrangement fourth) in a wrong position, that a duty to parents is a duty towards our neighbour.'[1]

The enumeration commonly adopted by Catholic writers,

[1] Smith's 'Concise Dictionary of the Bible'—'Ten Commandments.'

and followed in our Catechisms, divides the commandments into two groups, three and seven. The three first, as contained in the enumeration given at the commencement of the chapter, containing our duties towards God, were written on one table, and the seven others, containing our duties towards our neighbour, were written on the other table.

This division of the commandments is the one given in the Catechism, and adopted by the Catholic Church, whilst in the Protestant Church our first commandment is divided into two, and according to this arrangement the enumeration differs in such a manner that their third is our second, their fourth our third, and so on. That the number ten may be kept, Protestant authors unite as one commandment our two, the ninth and the tenth. Their first two are made one by us because both relate to the one object—namely the worship of God; whilst the ninth and the tenth are kept distinct by us, inasmuch as it is one thing to covet a man's wife, and quite another thing to covet his house and possessions.

5. According to the division of the commandments into the two tables as above explained, we have on the first table the duties towards God, namely—1. *Fidelity: Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.* 2. *Respect: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* 3. *Service: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.*

On the second table we have inscribed our duties towards men. These are, in the first place, the duties of children towards their parents, and of servants towards their masters: *Honour thy father and thy mother.* Then we have imposed upon us the obligation not to injure another either by *action*, or by *word*, or by *desire*. 1. One may injure another by *action*, namely, in his own person, or in one united to him in wedlock, or in his property, and hence we have the three

commandments: *Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal.* 2. By *word*, especially by false testimony: *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.* 3. By *desire*, in wishing that which is unlawful and unjust, and hence the two commandments: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.*

6. This division of the commandments has the sanction of Christ, and was summarized by Him into two. A lawyer asked Him: . . . *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?* Jesus said to him: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*[1]

The same teaching is also found in the Mosaic law; thus the words, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength,*[2] are found in Deuteronomy, whilst in Leviticus occurs the expression: *Thou shalt love thy friend* (neighbour) *as thyself.*[3] Our Divine Lord therefore taught us that love is the fulfilling of the law, when He summed up all the commandments into the two—the love of God, and the love of our neighbour; for on these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets.

The Mosaic law, as we have said in the former chapter, was divided into three parts: 1. The *civil or judicial*, which is not binding on Christians. 2. The *ceremonial*, which is also no longer of obligation. 3. The *moral* law, which is binding upon all men. This is clearly shown by Christ's own declaration: *Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil,*

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 35-39. [2] Deut. vi. 4, 5. [3] Lev. xix. 18.

For amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.[1]

In the new law the precepts are also threefold, namely: 1. The moral of the old law, but confirmed and more fully explained by our Saviour in His Sermon on the Mount.[2] 2. *Sacramental: Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*[3] And again: *Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you.*[4] 3. *Precepts of faith: He who believeth not shall be condemned.*[5] And again: *Which, if he will not hear them, tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican.*[6]

The moral law is that common to Jews and Christians, but in speaking generally of the old dispensation and of the new, and inasmuch as the circumstances of the Israelites at the time of the delivery of these commandments were typical of our condition now, and the ground on which obedience to them was demanded of the chosen nation more strongly applies to Christians, I may give here a summary of the principal analogies of the Mosaic and Evangelical laws and their differences:

7. *Their Analogies.*—1. As the former was promulgated by the Lord God through Moses to the Jews, filled with fear on Mount Sinai, on the fiftieth day after the Pasch, in the midst of thunder and fire,[7] so the latter was promulgated by Christ our Lord through the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, terrified by fear and filled with the ardour of Divine charity, on the fiftieth day after the Pasch, accompanied by a vehement sound of a mighty wind, and in the form of

[1] St. Matt. v. 17, 18. [2] *Ibid.* 27 *et seq.* [3] St. John iii. 5
[4] *Ibid.* vi. 54. [5] St. Mark xvi. 16. [6] St. Matt. xviii. 17.
[7] Exod. xix. 18.

tongues of fire on Mount Sion. This was prophesied by Isaias: *For the law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*[1] 2. As the former was good, useful, just, and distinctive of its people, so the latter is good, useful, just, and distinctive of the Christian people.

8. *Their Differences.*—We have to note the following differences between the old and the new law: 1. The former was imperfect: *For the law brought nothing to perfection;*[2] and it was also insufficient for salvation, containing, as St. Paul says, *weak and needy elements.*[3] The latter is perfect and sufficient: *Grace and truth came by* Jesus Christ.[4] 2. The former affected only the Jews as to its civil and ceremonial part; the latter in its entirety affects all men, and is binding on all. 3. The former was a heavy yoke, *which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear;*[5] the yoke of the latter is sweet, and the burden light. 4. The former was a law of fear, *that hearing they may have fear;*[6] the latter is a law of love: *You are not under the law, but under grace.*[7] 5. The former is the bondwoman, the latter the free, according to the words of St. Paul: *Where this Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*[8] 6. The former is as a shadow or cloud: *all happened to them in figure.*[9] The latter is a *light which enlighteneth every man coming into the* world.[10] 7. The former was to be abrogated in time; the latter is to last until the end of the world.[11] 8. The former promised earthly things: *If you be willing and will hearken to Me, you shall eat the good things of the land.*[12] The latter promises heavenly things, as exemplified in the eight beatitudes: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven: blessed are the meek, for they*

[1] Isa. ii. 3.
[2] Heb. vii. 19.
[3] Gal. iv. 9.
[4] St. John i. 17.
[5] Acts xv. 10.
[6] Deut. xix. 20.
[7] Rom. vi. 14.
[8] 2 Cor. iii. 17.
[9] 1 Cor. x. 11
[10] St. John i. 9.
[11] Heb. vii. 12, 24.
[12] Isa. i. 19.

shall possess the land: . . . blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God, etc.[1]

Notwithstanding that the old law was imperfect yet we find many persons justified during its period, such as the patriarchs and prophets and other saints of the old law; but their justification was not by virtue of the law, but by faith in the future Messias, our Divine Saviour, and through His foreseen merits they obtained the grace of their justification. The law was given through Moses, grace through Jesus Christ.

9. *The Principles of Interpretation* to be followed in explaining the Ten Commandments.

The commandments are *affirmative* and *negative;* that is, they order something to be done, and forbid something. This twofold aspect must be observed in each of the commandments. The negative aspect prevails, but at the same time it is manifest that every *Thou shalt not* implies a counter *Thou shalt*, because their observance must come from the heart and soul; and it may be observed that two of them, the third and the fourth, take the affirmative form: *Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath-day; Honour thy father and thy mother.* (1) In interpreting the commandments, therefore, we must always remember that, when any duty is enjoined the contrary sin is forbidden, and when any sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is enjoined. (2) The Ten Commandments must be interpreted according to their spirit, and not only according to their letter (as the Pharisees were in the habit of doing). Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, laid down this principle by the explanation He gave of some of the commandments.

(3) Love is the fulfilling of the law. This line of thought is conveyed by the fact that the Ten Commandments are summarized in 'our duty towards God' and 'our duty

[1] St. Matt. v. 3 *et seq.*

towards our neighbour.' The duty towards God means to love Him with all our heart, with all our mind, and with all our strength; and our duty towards our neighbour is accomplished by loving our neighbour as we do ourselves.

(4) We have to notice that there are four of the commandments in which reasons why they should be kept are contained:

First Commandment: *I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands to them that love Me, and keep My commandments.*[1]

Second Commandment: *For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of the Lord his God in vain.*[2]

Third Commandment: *For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day and sanctified it.*[3]

Fourth Commandment: *That thou mayst be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee.*[4] This commandment having this promise attached to it is called by St. Paul *the first commandment with a promise.*[5]

I may conclude with the following extract, quoted in the companion to the Catechism, from the Catechism of Perseverance.

10. We ought to regard the Decalogue as the most admirable present that God could make us. This is shown by the following comparison:

'A traveller pursues his way towards a magnificent city, where a splendid fortune as well as a beloved family await him. Between him and the desired city there is a bottomless abyss. The country is shrouded in darkness. The

[1] Exod. xx. 5, 6. [2] *Ibid.* 7. [3] *Ibid.* 11.
[4] *Ibid.* 12. [5] Eph. vi. 2.

traveller is without a guide or a light. Across the abyss there is only one narrow, shaky plank; over this plank he must of necessity pass, and yet he is very liable to make a false step, as experience has too often convinced him. If a charitable guide were to come and take this traveller by the hand—if he were to erect a barrier on each side of the fatal plank, and fix thereon a number of bright lights, so that it would be impossible for the traveller to fall into the pit, unless by deliberately pulling down the barriers and extinguishing the lights, with what gratitude should not this traveller accept the kind offices of his guide? Well, this traveller is man on earth. The city where happiness awaits him is heaven; the abyss is hell; the weak, narrow, unsteady plank is life; the charitable guide is God; the barriers erected alongside the plank, and the lamps suspended therefrom, are the commandments of God.'

O my God, we shall always say that the Decalogue is one of Thy greatest benefits; and we will take care never to violate it, that so we may not fall during life under the heavy yoke of our passions, and after death into the horrid abyss of hell.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION AND THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

1. The text of the first commandment.
2. The commandment both *affirmative* and *negative*.
3. The virtue of religion. (1) The definition of the virtue. (2) Its objects, *material* and *formal*. (3) The acts of religion.
4. Devotion : its causes and effects.
5. Prayer. (1) Its definition and division. (2) Its essential and integral parts. (3) The necessity of prayer. (4) The effects of prayer. (5) The conditions of prayer. (6) Those for whom we are to pray and (7) Those who can pray.
6. External acts of religion.
7. Adoration : its definition and division.
8. God, and God alone, is to be adored by *latria*, or supreme worship.
9. Christ in His sacred humanity is also to be adored with Divine and supreme worship.
10. The adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is pious, and free from every taint of superstition.
11. The adoration to be paid to the Holy Name of Jesus, to the Blessed Virgin, and the Angels and Saints.
12. Some Scripture examples illustrating (1) those who were punished for claiming Divine honours, and (2) those who refused Divine honours.

1. THE first commandment is: 'I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve

them.' This is the text given in the Catechism of the Christian doctrine used in England. In the Maynooth Catechism we have the first commandment given summarized in the few words: 'I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.'

The first commandment orders us to be faithful to God—that is to say, to render to Him the honour that is due to Him alone as the immortal King of ages, the beginning and the end of all things.

2. This commandment is both *affirmative* and *negative*. Inasmuch as it is affirmative it enjoins some duty, and inasmuch as it is negative it forbids some sin. We have therefore to consider it as to the duties which it enjoins and the sins which it forbids.

The honour which we pay to a superior in testimony of his excellence and of our subjection to him is called by the name of worship. The virtue which inclines us to give to God the worship that is due to Him is called the virtue of religion. The first commandment orders us then, in the first place, to practise the virtue of religion.

3. *The Virtue of Religion.*—In treating of the virtue of religion, we have to divide the subject into two parts:

(*a*) The definition and the object of religion.

(*b*) The acts of religion.

(1) Religion as a special virtue is, according to St. Thomas, a moral virtue inclining the will to give the supreme worship to God which is due to Him as the first beginning of all things. It is a special virtue because it has a special object, namely, the worship of God. It is a virtue which may be considered less than the theological virtues, which have God for their immediate object, but which is the most excellent of all the moral virtues, because it is more closely connected with God than the other moral virtues, and because it is the one which directs and ordains

everything that is immediately destined for the Divine worship.

(2) The *material object* of the virtue of religion is the Divine worship, or the acts of honour and reverence by which man proclaims the Divine excellence and his own subjection to God. The *formal object* of the virtue of religion is the reason of this debt or duty, the foundation of which is the infinite excellence of God, inasmuch as He is the efficient cause of the creation, and the Ruler of all things.

The Divine Persons are the one principle of the creation and government of things, and they are to be served by one religion, and religion itself is one virtue, although God produces and governs His creatures by different attributes, namely, by His wisdom, His power, and His goodness, etc.

(3) *The Acts of Religion.*—Of the acts of religion, some are *internal* and some *external.*

The internal acts of the virtue of religion are devotion and prayer. Here we may explain these two, because they are so necessarily connected with the service and worship of God.

4. Devotion, strictly and theologically taken, is the act of the will of man offering himself to God to serve Him. It is evident that the will of promptly doing what appertains to the service of God is a special act; hence devotion is a special act of the will. It is also evident that to do those things which appertain to the Divine worship and service belongs, properly speaking, to religion; and to the same also must we refer the will which promptly leads to the performance of those things, which is the same as being devout, and thus it follows that devotion is the act of the virtue of religion.[1]

St. Thomas teaches us the causes and effects of devotion

[1] All from St. Thomas, apud Van der Meeren. Tract. de Virtutibus.

The extrinsic and principal cause is God Himself. The intrinsic cause on our part should be meditation and contemplation, inasmuch as man by meditation is brought to give himself to the Divine service. This may be effected by the twofold consideration: one on the part of the Divine goodness and benefits, the consideration of which moves us to the love of God, which is the proximate cause of devotion; the other on the part of man, considering his defects, through which, or on account of which, he has so much need to rest and depend on God; and this consideration excludes presumption, by which a man is prevented from subjecting himself to God when he relies too much upon his own strength.

The effects of devotion are, first, spiritual joy and delight from the consideration of the Divine goodness; secondly, sadness or sorrow, which is according to the will of God, arising from the consideration of our own defects and faults.

5. *Prayer.*—We have only to speak here of prayer in general and in a summary manner, as it is not the place to introduce a full treatise on prayer. Following the order of St. Thomas, we have to consider the *nature of prayer*, its *necessity*, its *effects* and *conditions*, and, finally, those *for whom* and *to whom* we are to pray.

(1) Prayer, according to Benedict XIV., may be defined as raising up the mind to God, or holding discourse with God. It is divided into *mental* and *vocal*, *meditation* and *contemplation;* it is also divided into *public* and *private*, and, lastly, into the prayer of praise, of thanksgiving, and of petition.

To understand properly the nature of prayer, it is necessary to explain its component parts.

(2) Prayer has its essential and its integral parts. Its essential parts are the raising up or the elevation of the soul to God; and petition, which St. Paul designates by the

names of prayer and supplication.[1] Unless a petition be added to the elevation of the mind to God, the prayer will be inefficacious, dry, and unfruitful, and the exercise or act will be only a study or speculation, rather than a prayer properly so called. St. Isidore says: *Orare est petere sicut exorare est impetrare* (To pray is to ask, as entreat means to impetrate—ask earnestly).

The *integral* parts of prayer are: (1) *Supplication*, by which we ask pardon for sins, and make protestation, or put in a claim, so to speak, to God, by reason of His goodness which permits us to do so. (2) *Thanksgiving*, by showing our gratitude for graces received, which disposes us for the reception of new favours. To this may be added (3) the prayer of *praise*. Taking all these into consideration, we have the full definition of prayer as contained in the Catechism, namely: 'Prayer is that by which we raise up our mind and heart to God, by thinking of Him, by adoring, praising, and thanking him, and by begging of Him all blessings for soul and body.'

Prayer is an act of the *intellect*, because man by prayer ordains or disposes things, by manifesting his desire to God that something may be done. It proceeds, however, remotely from the *will*, which desires to obtain something from God, and applies the *intellect* to ask for it. It is an act of religion, because, as St. Thomas tells us, by prayer man pays reverence to God, inasmuch as he subjects himself to Him, and professes by praying that he needs Him as the Author of all good.

(3) *The Necessity of Prayer.*—For all adults prayer is necessary for salvation. (1) It is certainly necessary by the *necessity of precept*, both by the natural and the Divine precept. (2) It is also necessary by the *necessity of means*, inasmuch as prayer is a medium without which some things

[1] 1 Tim. ii.

necessary for salvation cannot be obtained. This precept of prayer obliges of itself often during life. Theologians are not agreed as to how often it obliges, especially under grave sin. The precept obliges by *accident*, or indirectly through another precept, which cannot be fulfilled without the aid obtained through prayer, as, for example, to overcome a great temptation. On the necessity of prayer, the pious Cardinal Bona writes as follows in his treatise on the principles of a Christian life: 'The necessity of prayer is such that it is a matter of faith, that no one without it can obtain his eternal salvation. For who can follow the vocation that God gives him unless he is assisted by the gift of grace? And who can merit this help without prayer? And hence the Scriptures teach us that we ought always and without intermission to pray, because we always and in all things need the grace of God. And he may be said to pray always who never for a day passes over the times of prayer.'

(4) *The Effects of Prayer.*—The effects of prayer that are common to all other good works are, to impetrate, to merit, and to satisfy; but with this difference, that the impetration which in other good works is implicit is explicit in prayer. The proper and peculiar effect of prayer is a certain spiritual refection of the mind, or spiritual consolation, which, however, is often wanting.

Cardinal Bona, in his treatise on the principles of a Christian life, tells us how in prayer all the virtues are put in practice. 'First of all, *faith*—for no one would pray unless he believed that God was present to hear the prayer of those who call upon Him, and that He is ready and willing to grant our requests if we ask what is right. *Hope*, too, is called into exercise, since we must needs have the greatest confidence in the power and the mercy of God. *Charity* is excited in the soul by the goodness of God, which urges us to love Him above all things. By prayer we

learn to fulfil all *justice*, and to weigh all things with the *prudence* of the just. *Fortitude* is exercised, because he who prays determines firmly to serve God, and to endure all adversities and trials for the sake of His love. Acts of *temperance* are also made, inasmuch as the mind of him who prays is drawn into a distaste for all earthly and corporeal things, and feels the delights of heaven, and so on, of the other virtues. He, then, who applies to prayer is adorned with many virtues.'

(5) *The Conditions of Impetratory Prayer.*—Four conditions are assigned as required that one may efficaciously obtain what he asks in prayer:

(i.) That it be piously offered—that is, with the pious affection of the mind and with a lively faith, because it is by faith that one comes to the knowledge of the Divine omnipotence and mercy, from which prayer obtains its petition. It should be accompanied also by hope and charity: *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you.*[1]

(ii.) That it be with *perseverance: He who perseveres to the end shall be saved.*[2]

(iii) That we ask what is necessary, or certainly useful, for salvation. It is lawful to ask for spiritual things absolutely, but for temporal things under the express or implied condition that they be granted if expedient for our salvation: *And this is the confidence which we have towards Him: That whatsoever we shall ask according to His will, He heareth us.*[3]

(iv.) For *one's self: If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you.*[4] St. Augustine says: 'All the Saints are heard for themselves, and not infallibly for others. It often happens that prayer offered for

[1] St. John xv. 7. [2] St. Matt. xxiv. 13. [3] 1 St. John v. 14.
[4] St. John xiv. 13.

another is not efficacious in obtaining, even though it be offered with piety and perseverance and for spiritual favours, because of an impediment on the part of the person for whom the prayer is offered. He may be in sin and unwilling to repent.' St. Alphonsus, speaking on this point, says: 'It is quite certain that the prayers of others are very profitable to sinners and very pleasing to God. God has complained of His servants because they neglect to recommend sinners to His mercy. He once said to St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi, "See, my child, how sinners are in the hands of the devil; if My elect by their prayers did not deliver them, they should be devoured." The Almighty desires in a particular manner that priests and religious pour forth their prayers in behalf of sinners.'[1]

Suarez and many other theologians hold that this condition is not absolute, for many texts of Scripture speak without any restriction; and the text quoted for this condition, *I you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it to you*,[2] need not be restrictive. The *vobis* (to you) does not mean to restrict the gift to the person who asks, but that God will give or grant his request.

(6) *Those for Whom we are to Pray.*—We should pray for others and for our enemies. We should ask in prayer all that we ought to desire, and we ought to desire good to others as well as to ourselves; this belongs to the nature of the love which we should have for our neighbour: therefore charity requires us to pray for others.

We are bound by charity to love our enemies, and we are bound, therefore, out of charity to pray for them; that is, it is necessary that we exclude not our enemies from our common prayers, but that we pray for them specially is a matter of perfection, and not of obligation, unless in some

[1] St. Alphonsus Lig., 'Conditions of Prayer.'
[2] St. John xi. 22; xiv. 13; xv. 16; St. Matt. vii. 7; St. Luke xi. 9.

particular and special instance. We should therefore pray: (1) For all men: *I desire*, says St. Paul, *that prayer be made for all men.*[1] (2) For our enemies. Our Saviour tells us to pray *for them who persecute and calumniate us.*[2] (3) For the souls in purgatory, according to the words of Scripture: *It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.*[3]

Some have a special claim to our prayers, as they have to our love—such as parents and relatives, our pastors, Bishops, and the Pope, our princes and rulers; and we should also extend that charity to the practice of praying for those who are outside the pale of the Church, and for the conversion of sinners.

Those to whom we are to pray will be considered under the subject of adoration, when we come, after treating of the worship of God, to speak of the invocation of Saints.

(7) *Those Who can Pray.*—Prayer is an act of reason, by which one addresses himself to a superior in supplication. They only can pray, therefore, who have the use of reason, and who can acknowledge a superior. Hence it belongs only to rational creatures to pray. The Saints in heaven can certainly pray for us, and it is commonly held that the souls in Purgatory can and do pray for us.

6. *The External Acts of Religion.*—The principal external acts of religion are adoration, sacrifice, and oblation. To those we may add, of our own free will, two more, an *oath* and a *vow*. Oaths and vows belong more properly to the second commandment than to the first. Sacrifice may be explained more fully and more conveniently when explaining the Holy Eucharist and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. It remains, therefore, that in this place we confine ourselves to the consideration of the first great act of religion—namely, adoration and worship.

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 1. [2] St. Matt. v. 44. [3] 2 Mac. xii. 46.

7. *The Adoration or Worship of God.*—Adoration means honour paid or shown to another on account of his superior excellence, in protestation of our submission towards him. As an act of religion, adoration is a testimony of the Divine excellence, with some act of submission on our part, as, for example, genuflecting before the Blessed Sacrament. I take it here in its strict sense, for the supreme act of *latria*. It is, as theologians say, an act of the *will*, connoting an act of the intellect, by which the supreme excellence of another is perceived.

The Division of Adoration.—Firstly, adoration may be *internal* as well as *external*. *Internal* is that which is offered by the interior acts of the mind; and this manner of adoration is very pleasing to God, Who can see into the heart, and it is an adoration that may be used frequently, in any place, and at any time. *External* adoration is that which is manifested by some external or sensible signs, such as speaking, or bending the knee, or falling prostrate, as the prophet David signified when he exclaimed: *Come, let us adore and fall down before the Lord.*

Secondly, adoration, by reason of the object, is divided into *latria*, *dulia*, and *hyperdulia*. The Greek word λατρεὺω is the same as *I serve*, *reverence*, or *adore*, and it is limited by Catholic writers to mean supreme or Divine worship. Δουλὲυω is the same as *I serve* or *honour*. The adoration that is offered on account of the uncreated excellence is called, therefore, *latria;* and that offered for created excellence, specially the excellence of sanctity and glory, is called by Catholic theologians *dulia;* and when that sanctity and excellence are of a special and singular kind, such as the sanctity and excellence of the Mother of God, the honour or adoration due, and to be given, is called *hyperdulia*—that is, *above dulia.*

Thirdly, adoration is divided into *absolute* and *relative.*

Absolute is the adoration that is given to a person *propter se* —that is, on account of his own intrinsic excellence. Only intellectual beings are adorable in this sense. *Relative* is that which is given to a thing, not on its own account, but on account of the excellence which is in some person, to whom it is assimilated, or with whom it has some relation or connection, such as the adoration paid to relics or images.

8. God, and God alone, is to be adored by *latria*, or supreme worship. The God whom we must adore is the one God in three Persons, as well as each of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, because each Person is God.

We have to adore God as our Sovereign, Lord, and Master. The law of nature obliges us to this, because by it all human beings are obliged to acknowledge the great majesty of God, and His supreme dominion over all His creatures. This obligation is clearly announced by the first commandment, and we are again reminded of it by the words of our Divine Saviour: *The Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.*[1]

This adoration is given to God, not only by the public and liturgical forms of worship which are rendered in the name of the Church, and by her authority and according to her rites, but also by our private devotions and prayers, and even by our interior acts.

It is the interior worship that gives life to all our exterior acts; but we must not conclude from this that exterior worship is useless, or that it is dangerous or gives rise to superstition, as some hypocritical enemies of religion pretend. Man in reality depends entirely upon God both in soul and body, and he should therefore pay to God the homage of body as well as that of soul. It is by uniting exterior to interior worship that we can testify our total dependence upon God. Besides, it is impossible for one to

[1] St. Matt. iv. 10.

be truly and sincerely religious without manifesting it in some way externally. We must show our thoughts and sentiments, especially our deep religious feelings, either by words, or gestures, or attitudes that signify either supplication, thanksgiving, or repentance. Exterior worship is the means of nourishing the interior worship, of reviving it when it languishes; it is, as it were, the fuel which enlivens and inflames it. Hence our public prayers, our processions, our pilgrimages, missions, and retreats, and all the other exterior forms of public and prrvate worship.

9. Christ, the Son of God, subsisting in the Divine and human natures, is also the object of *latria*, or supreme adoration, the same as that given to the Blessed Trinity and to each Person of the Blessed Trinity. This is a dogma of faith: *That all men may honour the Son as they honour the Father.*[1] And *in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.*[2] In the Apocalypse we read: *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the ancients; and the number of them was thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice: The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction.*[3] This doctrine has also been defined by the Church in her Councils (Ephes. c. 8, Lyons 7, c. 9, and Lateran under Martin I.).

The human nature of Christ hypostatically united to the Word is to be adored with the same adoration as that given to the Divinity. This follows from the preceding doctrine, and is also to be believed by Catholic faith, inasmuch as the contrary proposition was proscribed and condemned in the fifth and sixth General Councils. The reasons for this teaching may be considered with advantage. (1) In

[1] St. John v. 23. [2] Philip. ii. 10. [3] Apoc. v. 11, 12.

Christ the nature of man is always inseparably united to the Word; therefore it is not to be separated from it in honour and veneration. (2) Adoration or worship is always paid to the person; but there is only one person in Christ, namely, the Person of the only begotten Son of God, to Whom always supreme worship is due. For the clearer understanding of this doctrine it is necessary to distinguish between the *object* of our worship and its *motive*. The object is the sacred humanity of Christ as it subsists in the Divine Word, or in the concrete, which is adored directly and *in se;* the motive is the hypostatic union, or the excellence of the Divine Person to Whom the human nature is united.

We therefore adore the sacred humanity of Christ because it is united to the Word of God by the unity of person, and as a consequence we adore also each part of that sacred humanity, the Soul of Christ and His Body, His Sacred Heart, His Precious Blood, and His Five Wounds.

10. The *cultus* or the adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is pious and free from all taint of superstition, as is certain from the censure attached by Pius VI. in the Bull *Auctorem fidei* to the sixty-two propositions of the Synod of Pistoja.

The object of this devotion is the bodily or physical Heart of Christ. The worship or adoration to be given to it is *latria*, by reason of the Divine Person to whom it is united. The special reasons or motives that prompt a particular devotion to the Sacred Heart are the following: (1) Our Divine Saviour has shown us His Sacred Heart as the fountain of His affections and the example of His virtues by the words: *Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.*[1]

[1] 'Manual of Devotion to the S. Heart,' by the Rev. Fr. Gautrelet, S.J.

(2) According to Scriptural usage and the common manner of speech, the heart is the symbol of love, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the symbol of His immense charity towards us. (3) Christ used His Sacred Heart as He did His Five Sacred Wounds, as a main instrument in effecting the work of our redemption. (4) Each part of the sacred humanity is hypostatically united to the Word, therefore the Heart of Jesus is hypostatically united to the Word, to Whom it belongs, and from Whom it cannot be separated, and on this account it is worthy of our adoration, of our worship, and of our love; for the love with which it burns for us is the love of a God; the grief which it feels for our sins is the grief of a God; the mildness, the patience, the humility, the obedience we admire in the Heart of Jesus are the virtues of a Man-God; the humiliations, the outrages, the ingratitude of which it is the object are directed against a Divine Person; it follows also that the honour we yield to this Divine Heart, the worship, the reparation, the love we offer it, are really addressed to the Divine Person.

What is said of the adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus applies also to the adoration of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, since this Sacrament contains the true Body and Blood of Christ, together with His soul and Divinity really present under its species.

11. The Holy Name of Jesus has to be honoured not with absolute *latria*, but only relative, inasmuch as it only shows us Christ, or signifies Him; and the same may be said of His representation and images.

To the Blessed Virgin we have to pay the adoration of *hyperdulia*.

To the Angels and Saints we have to pay the honour called *dulia*—absolute honour of this kind; but the public offices or public (*cultus*) adoration of the Church is not to be given to the Saints, unless canonized or beatified

by the definite sentence or judgment of the Supreme Pontiff.

12. In illustration of the duty of worshipping God alone with Divine and Supreme adoration I may here quote: (1) Some Scripture examples of those that were or will be severely punished for claiming Divine honours; (2) some Scripture examples of those who refused Divine honours.

(1) Those ambitious of Divine honours: 1. Lucifer: *But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the depth of the pit.*[1] 2. Adam and Eve, punished by much labour and suffering.[2] 3. Nabuchodonosor, King of Babylon, *was made like to beasts.*[3] 4. The devil confused and banished by the correction of Christ.[4] 5. Herod Agrippa consumed by vermin.[5] 6. Antichrist, whom the Lord Jesus will kill.[6]

(2) Those that refused Divine honours when they were offered to them: 1. The Angel unwilling to be sacrificed to by Gideon: *Take the flesh and the unleavened loaves . . . and the Angel of the Lord vanished out of sight.*[7] 2. Peter and John, having cured the lame man: *Ye men of Israel, why wonder you at this? or why look you upon us as if by our strength and power we had made this man walk?*[8] 3. Peter being unwilling to be adored by Cornelius.[9] 4. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, after curing the lame man: *Ye men, why do ye these things? We also are mortals, men like unto you.*[10] 5. St. Paul, having shaken off the viper without receiving harm, was taken by the people of Melita for a god;[11] *and he left them.* 6. The Angel in the Apocalypse who said to John: *See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren, who have the testimony of Jesus: Adore God.*[12]

[1] Isa. xiv. 15. [2] Gen. iii. 5. [3] Dan. iv. 29.
[4] St. Matt. iv. 10. [5] Acts xii. 23. [6] 2 Thess. ii. 8.
[7] Judg. vi. 20, 21. [8] Acts iii. 12. [9] *Ibid.* x. 25, 26.
[10] *Ibid.* xiv. 14. [11] *Ibid.* xxviii. 6. [12] Apoc. xix. 10.

CHAPTER II.

THE VENERATION AND INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS AND ANGELS, AND OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

1. The different names of the departed servants of God.
2. The meaning of the adoration or honour offered to the Saints, and the teaching of the Church on this point.
3. Proofs of the doctrine.
4. The invocation of the Saints: the doctrine and its proofs.
5. The invocation and veneration of the Angels. (1) They pray for us. (2) They protect us. (3) They are affected with love and interest for us.
6. Scripture proofs of the doctrine of the invocation of the Angels.
7. Special reasons for honouring and invoking the Blessed Virgin.
8. The manner of addressing God through the Saints.
9. Dr. Lingard's observations on the doctrine of the invocation of Saints in the Anglo-Saxon Church.

1. THE Church makes use of various expressions to designate those of her departed children who are the object of the pious respect of the faithful. Thus, all Christians who die in the odour of sanctity are called the *servants of God*. Those are called *venerable* whose reputation for sanctity has been approved by lawful authority. Strictly speaking, they are those whose process of beatification has been commenced. Those are called *blessed* whose sanctity has been pronounced by the solemn judgment of the Church—that is, those to whom the Supreme Pontiffs permit public honour to be given in certain places and in certain religious Orders until the time of their solemn

canonization. Those are called *Saints* who have been solemnly canonized by the Catholic Church. Canonization is derived from that action by which the name of a holy person is placed in the canon or catalogue of the Saints; this action is the rightful, solemn and definitive declaration of the Sovereign Pontiff. It is more especially of the Saints we speak in this chapter, and not of the *blessed*, nor of the *venerable*, nor of the *servants of God*.

2. The veneration of Saints is commonly called the adoration (*cultus*) of the Saints—adoration taken in its wide sense for respect and honour, and not taken in its strict sense of *Divine worship*.

As has been said already, we give the Saints the honour called *dulia*, on account of their supernatural holiness and excellence. This is called a religious or a sacred honour, inasmuch as its motive is supernatural and sacred, and, if rightly performed, it is always a salutary work.

The Catholic Church teaches that 'the Saints, reigning with Christ, offer up their prayers to God for men; that it is good and profitable suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers and assistance in order to obtain favours from God, through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our *only* Redeemer and Saviour.'[1]

According to the Creed or Profession of Faith of Pius IV., we believe 'that the Saints reigning together with Christ are to be honoured and invoked, and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be respected.'

It has been unwarrantably assumed by Protestants that the Catholic, by invoking, must necessarily worship the Saints and Angels as divinities, and therefore, as often as he entrusts his prayers to any one amongst them, he transfers to the creature that Divine and superior homage that belongs to God alone. But this is false, and as the

[1] Counc. Trid., Sess. XXV.

premises, so the consequences deduced from them are equally erroneous. The Catholic believes that the most flagrant of all crimes would be to exhibit the slightest particle of that respect and adoration pertaining to the Divine Being towards any creature, however pre-eminent for sanctity amongst his fellow-men, or highly exalted in heaven amidst the hierachy of angels or the choir of blessed Saints. The Catholic can, however, easily point out a difference (and an immeasurable distance) between Divine worship and the honour he manifests towards the Saints.[1] A religious respect and veneration may be rendered to the Saints and Angels. It has been admitted by all classes of people, and in every age, as a principle of the law of nature, and received as a common axiom: that we should give honour to whom honour is due. In the words of Cicero, *Habet enim venerationem justam, quicquid excellit* (Whatever excels is justly entitled to veneration).

3. This doctrine may be clearly proved from sacred Scripture. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, tells them: *Render therefore to all men their dues . . . honour to whom honour is due.*[2] In his Epistle to the Philippians he tells them: *Receive him* (Epaphroditus), *therefore, with all joy in the Lord: and treat him with honour such as he is.*[3] St. Paul calls him his brother and fellow-labourer and fellow-soldier.[4] And again, writing to Timothy, he says: *Let the priests that rule well be esteemed worthy of double honour: especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*[5]

This practice is warranted by the example of the most faithful and the holiest servants of Heaven. 1. It was God Himself who first directed man to reverence the angels, as He thus addressed the Israelites through Moses: *Behold, I will send My Angel, who shall go before thee and keep thee in*

[1] 'Hierurgia,' by Rev. Daniel Rock, D.D., *in loco.*
[2] Rom. xiii. 7. [3] Phli. ii. 29. [4] *Ibid.* 25. [5] 1 Tim. v. 17.

thy journey, and bring thee unto the place that I have prepared. Take notice of him and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned, for he will not forgive when thou hast sinned, and My name is in him.[1] 2. We behold the Patriarchs and the Saints of old bowing down before the Angels, and rendering them the most profound respect. Abraham, on receiving the three Angels into his tent, fell prostrate at their feet.[2] Lot, on seeing the two angels that came to Sodom, rose up and went to meet them, and worshipped prostrated on the ground.[3] Josue displayed an equal reverence towards the angel-spirit whom he beheld when, *as he was in the field of the city of Jericho, he lifted up his eyes, and saw a man standing over against him, holding a drawn sword, and he went to him, and said: Art thou one of ours, or of our adversaries? And he answered: No; but I am a prince of the host of the Lord, and now I am come. Josue fell on his face to the ground, and worshipping said: What saith my Lord to his servant? Loose, said he, thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy.*[4]

The excellence and perfection of the Saints and Angels, and above all their sanctity, demands our respect and reverence: for besides the sanctity which is common to holy men and women here on earth, the sanctity of the Saints has the following special and peculiar qualities. (1) Their holiness is infallibly certain: not so ours. (2) Their sanctity is pure and immaculate for ever: as for us, we offend in many things. (3) Theirs cannot be lost: ours can and often is. (4) They are free, not only from sin, but from all danger and remnant of sin, and from every inclination in regard to it: and this is not the case with holy men on earth. (5) They are in their heavenly home more closely united with God, seeing Him face to face and

[1] Exod. xxiii. 20, 21.
[2] Gen. xviii. 2.
[3] *Ibid.* xix. 1.
[4] Josue v. 13 *et seq.*

loving Him for ever in the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision; whilst we are all still wanderers and wayfarers struggling in this vale of tears. From these qualities it is manifest how worthy the Saints are of our honour and veneration.

We may also reflect on the manner in which God Himself has deigned to honour and to magnify His Saints and Angels. (1) He promulgated His law of old through the ministry of His Angels.[1] (2) Angels will come at the end of the world, at the Second Coming of Christ, when He will judge the living and the dead. *The Son of man will come, in the glory of His Father, with all His angels.*[2] (3) In the different places of the sacred Scripture in which the glory and beatitude of the Saints are mentioned, we may discover or recognise so many proofs and testimonies of the honour which God bestowed upon them.

We naturally enough conclude, from these facts, that those whom God honours we should honour. To illustrate this we may recall two Scriptural examples. The first is that of Joseph in Egypt. *He* (Pharao) *said therefore to Joseph: Seeing that God hath shown thee all that thou hast said, can I find one wiser or like unto thee? Thou shalt be over my house, and at the commandment of thy mouth all the people shall obey; only in the kingly throne will I be above thee. And he took his ring from his own hand, and gave it into his hand; and he put upon him a robe of silk, and put a chain of gold about his neck. And he made him go up into his second chariot, the crier proclaiming that all should bow their knee before him*, etc.[3] The second example may be taken from the Canticle of our Blessed Lady—the *Magnificat: My soul doth magnify the Lord. For behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed; for He that is mighty hath done great things to me*, etc.[4]

[1] Acts vii. 53.
[2] St. Matt. xvi. 27.
[3] Gen. xli. 39 *et seq.*
[4] St. Luke i. 46 *et seq.*

Having fully proved and explained the reasons for the invocation of Saints and the special reasons for the devotion of Catholics to the Mother of God in 'The Creed Explained,' there is no need in this place to repeat the explanation there given. I may, however, briefly and explicitly repeat here a few points of the Catholic doctrine of the invocation of the Saints and Angels, after having explained the honour and veneration that are due to them.

4. The invocation of the Saints is lawful and useful. There is no question as to the necessity of the invocation of Saints, for all Catholics admit that the invocation of Saints is not absolutely necessary for salvation. It may, however, happen that by a precept or rubric of the Church we may be obliged to invoke the Saints, as in the case of those who are obliged to say Mass and the Divine Office according to the Ecclesiastical Calendar. What is stated as to the doctrinal teaching of the Church is, that it is lawful and useful to invoke the Saints. The doctrine may be clearly proved from Scripture. Christ Himself assures us that the Saints in heaven *are equal to Angels, and are the children of God.*[1] Like the Angels, they receive a power over the kingdoms of the earth, and their inhabitants; for our Blessed Saviour thus declares: *He that shall overcome and keep My work, I will give him power over the nations.*[2] And it is observed by St. Paul that *we see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face. Now,* says the Apostle, *I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known.*[3] The language of St. John is still more remarkable, for he says: *Dearly beloved, we are now the Sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when we shall appear we shall be like to Him: because we shall see Him as He is.*[4] The power, therefore, and the knowledge with which Angels are endowed, and the same solici-

[1] St. Luke xx. 36. [2] Apoc. ii. 26. [3] 1 Cor. xiii 12. [4] 1 St. John iii. 2.

tude and charity for men which animate them, are equally attributable to the Saints who are now enjoying the Beatific Vision with the Angel-spirits, and participate with them in all the privileges of heaven ; discharge the same kind offices of brotherly affection towards poor mortals ; and they are equally entitled to receive the tribute of our honour and our reverence, and, like the Angels, may be profitably invoked to assist us by their intercession at the throne of mercy.[1]

Secondly, we may refer to the fact that holy men, even in this life, have been invoked by others. This occurrence is often noticed in the Old as well as in the New Testament, that the servant of God who had rendered himself conspicuous for his virtues and his piety was, whilst living, continually solicited by his admiring brethren to intercede with Heaven in their favour. Thus, the children of Israel entreated holy Samuel.[2] The Lord Himself directed Eliphaz and Baldad and Sophas to go to His servant Job, and to request the favourite of Heaven to pray for them.[3] With St. Paul, it was perpetually the practice to solicit the prayers of the faithful.[4]

That the Apostles were sedulous to discharge in their turn the debt of Christian kindness, we may be certain, since St. Paul repeatedly announces to his converts that he did not cease to pray for them,[5] and St. John reiterated the same assurance. Whilst, therefore, the Apostles and those who had been initiated into the mysteries of the faith of Jesus by their labours demonstrated in their daily practice, that they believed that the prayers of the just man availeth much—although in many things we all offend ; and even the just man falleth seven times ; and if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves—they must have been persuaded that the prayers of the Saints above, of those who dwelt in

[1] 'Hierurgia,' by Rev. Dr. Rock, *in loco.*
[2] 1 Kings viii. 5.
[3] Job xlii. 8.
[4] Rom. xv. 30.
[5] Eph. vi. 18, 19.

heaven, where naught defiled can enter, and where they do not, cannot fall into the very smallest sin, were gifted with far more efficacious virtues, and availed much more, than the prayers of any mortal being, however righteous.

5. *The Invocation and Veneration of the Angels.*—Speaking of the Angels and their relations towards us, three things are certain: (1) They pray for us; (2) they watch over us; (3) they are affected with great love and interest for us. These things God has revealed to us concerning the Angels, and thereby signifies to us that it is lawful and useful to invoke them.

(1) The Angels pray for us. *And when he had opened the book, the four living creatures, and the four-and-twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the Saints.*[1] And again: *Another Angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given to him much incense that he should offer of the prayers of all the Saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God.*[2]

(2) The Angels protect and defend us. *See that ye condemn not one of these little ones: for I say to you, that their Angels in heaven always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.*[3] *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them, who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?*[4] And in the Psalms it is said that God *hath given His Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*[5]

(3) The Angels are affected with love and interest for us. *There shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance. . . . There shall be joy before the Angels of God upon one sinner doing penance.*[6]

[1] Apoc. v. 8. [2] *Ibid.* viii. 3. [3] St. Matt. xviii. 10.
[4] Heb. i. 14. [5] Ps. xc. 11, 12. [6] St. Luke xv. 7, 10.

6. The invocation of the Angels may be proved from the Psalms, from Genesis, and from the Apocalypse.

While reading the Psalms, everyone must be struck with those beautiful invocations to the Angels uttered by the Psalmist: *Bless the Lord*, he exclaims, *all ye His Angels: you that are mighty in strength. Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts · you ministers of His that do His will.*[1]

(1) David was aware that the sun and moon and stars could neither hear his voice nor chant the praises of the Creator; but he knew that the angelic spirits were hovering around him, and capable of mingling their songs of jubilation with his own, for he assures us *the Angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear Him.*[2]

(2) Just before his death, the patriarch Jacob, after he had called upon God in favour of the two sons of Joseph, Manasses and Ephraim, thus invoked an Angel's benediction on them: *The Angel that delivered me from all evils, bless these boys.*[3] Jacob consequently addressed a prayer of intercession to an angel.

(3) St. John, in writing to the seven Churches, greets them in the following manner: *Grace be unto you and peace from Him that is, and that was, and that is to come, and from the seven spirits which are before His throne*[4]—a form of benediction which, while it assures us that we may have recourse with much profit to the kind entreaties of the spirits that stand around the Majesty of heaven, in order to obtain grace, the spiritual gift of God, at the same time exhibits an example for our imitation; for the Apostle, by desiring that grace might flow from seven spirits, assuredly invoked them to obtain, by their entreaties, such a favour from Him before whose throne they were, since God only is the Author and Distributor of grace.[5]

[1] Ps. cii. 20, 21. [2] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 8. [3] Gen. xlviii. 16.
[4] Apoc. i. 4. [5] 'Hierurgia,' *in loco.*

7. *Special Reasons for Honouring and Invoking the Blessed Virgin.*—To the Blessed Virgin is due a veneration greater than and above that of the Angels and Saints. This species of honour or veneration is known among Catholics as *hyperdulia*—that is, above that given to the Angels and Saints, but still immeasurably inferior to the honour and worship that is due to God alone.

The principal reasons for our veneration and love for the Blessed Virgin may be here enumerated.

The first reason for our particular honour and devotion towards Mary is that the Blessed Trinity has loved her more than all the Angels and Saints. She is the most holy of all the heavenly inhabitants, and she is therefore deserving of more honour than they, according to the will of God, and according to the dictates of natural reason, which tells us to honour those the most who are the most worthy.

Our second reason is that she is the Mother of our God and Saviour, which is the cause of our profound veneration for her, in endeavouring to give her all the honour which her exalted dignity demands. All the honour that is given to her on this account is offered to Christ Himself. Speaking of the poor, He once said: *As long as you have done to one of these My least brethren, you have done it to Me.* How much more truly may we infer that all the honour that is shown to the Mother is also given at the same time to the Son!

The third reason is that she has the most tender love for us her children, and she wishes us to regard her as our Mother; this is sufficient to make us give her special reverence and love. It is natural for children to love their parents, especially when they know that they are very much loved by them. St. John at the foot of the Cross heard those words of our dying Lord, *Son, behold thy Mother;* and he, representing all the faithful, took her as his mother, and

ever afterwards venerated and loved her with the most sincere and tender charity.

The fourth motive is that she has care and interest over all that concerns us and our welfare. She not only hears the prayers which we offer to her, but she anticipates them and represents our many wants to God. We have an instance of this in her charity at the marriage-feast of Cana.

The fifth motive is that she has the power as well as the will to help us. There is nothing which she cannot obtain for poor sinners.

For these several reasons, it must appear evident to all that we should honour Mary in a particular manner, and that we should render to her a homage of respect greater than that which we pay to the Saints. But we say distinctly that every Catholic well understands that it would be a crime to pay the Blessed Virgin *latria*, or Divine worship, which is due to God alone. We adore, it is true, with *latria*, the Sacred Humanity of Christ, because of its personal union with the Word, Who is consubstantial with the Father. But the Divine Maternity of Mary, and much less any of her other prerogatives, do not establish between God and the Blessed Virgin a hypostatic union with a Divine Person, as that which in effect exists by reason of the Incarnation between the Eternal Word and the humanity which is united to it. Thus, we have to render to the Blessed Virgin a secondary and inferior honour to that which we have to give to her Divine Son. Nevertheless, because she is invested with a dignity eminently superior to the Angels and Saints, we have to give her honour and veneration of a kind supérior to that due to them, and which, in order to distinguish it from the kind offered to them, the Catholic Church calls *hyperdulia*.

8. *Manner of addressing God through the Saints.*—The form of prayer used in the solemn and public worship of

the Church will in the clearest manner testify her doctrine on the invocation of Saints. Throughout the Missal and the Breviary there is not one single prayer or collect addressed to any Saint whatever, but every one of them is directed to God alone. They begin with one or other of the following invocations to the Deity: *Omnipotens sempiterna Deus,* etc. (Almighty, eternal God). *Intercessio nos quæsumus omnipotens Deus* (Grant, O Almighty God), etc. They end with this conclusion: Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, etc.

The following strophe includes the sense of these lines, in which each anthem chanted in the public office closes:

> 'In this, most gracious Father, hear
> With Christ, Thy equal Son, our prayer,
> Who with the Holy Ghost and Thee
> Resides and reigns eternally. Amen.'[1]

9. We may conclude with Dr. Lingard's observations on the invocation of Saints in the Anglo-Saxon Church. 'But a short acquaintance with ancient literature,' he writes, 'will prove that our ancestors were too well instructed to confound man with God. They knew how to discriminate between the adoration due to the Supreme Being, and the honours which might be claimed by the most holy among His servants; and while they worshipped Him as the Author of every blessing, they paid no other respect to them than what was owing to those whom they considered as *His* favourites and their advocates. Whoever shall attentively peruse the works of the Saxon writers, or the acts of the Saxon Councils, from the era of their conversion to what is deemed the darkest period of their history, will observe the important distinction accurately marked and constantly inculcated. When the poet sang of his patron, he sought neither to interest his mercy nor depreciate his justice; to

[1] 'Hierurgia,' *in loco,* vol. i., p. 363.

obtain the assistance of his intercession, to be remembered by him at the throne of the Almighty, was the sole object of his petition. If the preacher from the pulpit exhorted his hearers to solicit the prayers of their more holy brethren, he was careful to inculcate that they should adore God alone. If a Christian, when he rose from his bed, was accustomed to beg the protection of the Saints, he was yet commanded in the first place to worship with bended knees the majesty of his Creator.'[1]

[1] Lingard's 'Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church.'

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGIOUS VENERATION OF RELICS.

1. What is meant by relics.
2. The veneration of the relics of Christ and the saints is lawful and useful.
3. The example of the first Christians—(1) By carrying off the bodies of the martyrs. (2) By collecting everything stained by the blood of the martyrs. (3) By using the martyrs' tombs as altars. (4) The practice of enclosing relics in altars at their consecration.
4. Relics collected and venerated by Protestants.
5. The authenticity of relics, and the Church's doctrine on this point, illustrated by the example of the Holy Coat of Trèves.
6. Conclusions deduced from this doctrine.
7. Three facts to be remembered as to the general principles and practice of the veneration of relics.

1. *The Veneration of Relics.*—By relics we mean, in a strict sense, the remains, ashes, bones, etc., of a Saint; and, in a secondary sense, we include under relics whatever belonged to the Saints that may be calculated to excite a pious remembrance of them.[1]

By the name of the relics of Christ and the Saints, we understand, not only parts of their bodies, but whatever was united to them, such as their garments, or things which they used when living, or those things, even, which were used as the instruments of their torture and of their martyrdom, such as St. Peter's chains. Hence, we venerate not only

[1] See Perrone, No. 22.

the true Cross of Christ, but also all those things that were used even as external instruments in effecting the work of our redemption or in connection with the death of Christ, such as the crown of thorns, the lance and nails, the tunic, the winding-sheet, the stable and crib of Bethlehem, the holy sepulchre, etc.

2. The religious veneration of the relics of Christ and the Saints is lawful and useful. This is the doctrine and teaching of the Council of Trent: 'That the bodies of holy martyrs and of others now living with Christ, which were the members of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit, and which shall be raised by Him to eternal life and be glorified, are to be venerated by the faithful.'

This practice is authorized by Scripture. The Scripture proofs may be summarized briefly: (1) The mantle of Elias converts Eliseus;[1] divides the Jordan under Elias,[2] and under Eliseus.[3] (2) The bones of Eliseus resuscitated the dead.[4] (3) The hem of Christ's garment cured the woman of the issue of blood.[5] And on another occasion the people *besought Him that they might touch but the hem of His garment. And as many as touched were made whole.*[6] (4) The shadow of St. Peter healed the infirm by the wayside.[7] And of St. Paul it is said that *handkerchiefs and aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them.*[8] According to the Scriptures, even the beasts respected holy persons and things. Thus: (1) The lions would not eat the dead body of the prophet.[9] (2) They would not injure Daniel in their den.[10] (3) *The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib.*[11] (4) St. Paul suffered no injury from the viper.[12]

A veneration of relics was shown from the earliest ages,

[1] 3 Kings xix. 20. [2] 4 Kings ii. 8. [3] *Ibid.* 14.
[4] *Ibid.* xii. 21. [5] St. Matt. ix. 20. [6] *Ibid.* xiv. 35.
[7] Acts v. 15. [8] *Ibid.* xix. 12. [9] 3 Kings xiii. 28.
[10] Dan. vi. 22; xiv. 39. [11] Isa. i. 3. [12] Acts xxviii. 3-5.

as illustrated in the example of Moses, who was careful to comply with the dying request of holy Joseph, and took along with him that venerable patriarch's bones to secure for them honourable sepulture in the land of promise.

3. The same reverence was shown by the first Christians. (1) By carrying off the bodies of the martyrs. In the history of the Church by Eusebius is a letter from the Church of Smyrna, in which, after giving an account of the martyrdom of their Bishop, St. Polycarp, the Smyrnians observe: 'Our subtle enemy, the devil, did his utmost that we should not take away the body, as many of us anxiously wished. It was suggested that we should desert our crucified Master and begin to worship St. Polycarp. Foolish men! who know not that we can never desert Christ, Who died for the salvation of all men, nor worship any other. Him we adore as the Son of God; but we show deserved respect to the martyrs as His disciples and followers. The centurion therefore caused the body to be burned; we then gathered his bones, more precious than pearls and more tried than gold, and buried them. In this place, God willing, we will meet, and celebrate with joy and gladness the birthday of His martyr, as well in memory of those who have been crowned before, as by his example, to prepare and strengthen others for the combat.'[1] (2) This same veneration was shown by the early Christians in collecting everything stained with the blood of the martyrs. The reason assigned for such a custom is that the primitive Christians, admonished by St. John in the Apocalypse, regarded the martyrs as those *who are come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. Those ardent believers, therefore, emulously endeavoured to procure some relic of the martyrs which should be to them and to their house-

[1] 'Hist. Eccles.,' lib. iv., ch. xv. See 'Hierurgia,' p. 375.

hold a *Tutamen Sacrum*, according to Prudentius, a hallowed safeguard, and a visible pledge that those happy souls were making intercession through the merits of the Saviour for them and all their families. So ardent was this fervour, that it influenced many to attend at the execution of the martyrs, and to spread out their garments to catch, if possible, some drops of that blood belonging to those heroes of Christianity; and illustrious matrons were known to exchange the most costly jewels for a garment which had been sprinkled with it.

In the Catacombs of Rome are daily discovered the tombs of the ancient martyrs, distinguished from the sepulchres of their brethren around them by the palm-branch, or some other Christian hieroglyphic, inscribed upon the tablet that seals them up; but more particularly by the vase of blood, which was usually inserted outside on the wall, within a horizontal excavation in which was deposited the body of the martyr.

The Christian poet Prudentius[1] makes the following allusions to this species of religious veneration:

> 'Those crimson dews from martyrs' hearts that ran
> Are rescued from the unhallowed tread of man
> By pious brethren, who, with linen band,
> Wipe up the gore that stains the thirsty strand.
> With blood that, reeking, on the club may stay,
> A sponge impressed will gently sip away.'

And again, while describing the martyrdom of St. Vincent, the poet says:

> 'Crowds haste the linen vest to stain
> With gore distilled from martyr's vein,
> And thus a holy safeguard place
> At home to shield their future race.'

(3) The same religious veneration is shown by the custom of using the martyrs' tombs as altars. This is demon-

[1] Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, who is justly regarded as the mos eminent and elegant of the ancient Christian poets, was born in Spain in 348, at Catalonia, in Old Castile.

strated, not only by the descriptions of the Christian cemeteries which we have in ancient authors, but by the ocular proofs that are obvious to the world in many of those very altars still extant in the Roman Catacombs, and accessible to the inquisitive traveller. One of the inscriptions composed by St. Paulinus for his Basilica of Nola, announces that portions of the relics of the Apostle St. Andrew, the Evangelist St. Luke, and of St. Nazarius and other martyrs, were deposited under the altar; and of these he sings:

> 'In regal shrines, with purple marble grac'd,
> Their bones are 'neath illumin'd altars plac'd;
> Thus pious bands contained in one small chest
> That holds such mighty names within its tiny breast.'

Prudentius, in those verses on the celebrated Spanish martyr, St. Vincent, again recalls our attention to this practice:

> 'The altar opes its place of rest,
> And holds the martyr's bones so bless'd.
> Beneath that altar now reposing,
> That sacred table o'er them closing,
> Enshrin'd within such hallow'd bound,
> Suffus'd with heav'n-born gift profound,
> Those bones drink in that grace-infusing air
> That's sweetly streaming all around them there.'[1]

(4) We have, from ancient times to the present day, the practice of enclosing relics in altars at their consecration. This is the rite to be observed in the consecration of altars and altar-stones. A small portion, at least, of relics must be enclosed in the altar for consecration, when an entire body of a Saint cannot be procured to be placed beneath it.

To illustrate the true import of this practice, I may quote the example used by one of the ancient Fathers: St. Germanus of Constantinople institutes a comparison between the body of the Saint departed, and a vessel once employed

[1] Rev. Dr. Rock in the 'Hierurgia.'

to hold some precious perfume, but now empty of the fragrant liquid, and observes that, as the vase continues redolent of the delicious aroma of the balm it once contained, after every drop of it be evaporated; so the relics of the saint—the vase that once was hallowed and replenished with the Holy Ghost—remain imbued with its sanctifying sweets, and exhale its odour though the spirit be departed. This elegant comparison of the venerable Patriarch may be happily expressed by employing, with a very little variation, the beautiful language of a celebrated poet:

> '*Long, long shall saints' relics with virtue befilled,*
> As the vase in which roses have once been distilled;
> You may break, you may ruin, the vase if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.'[1]

4. *Relics collected by Protestants.* — That the Catholic custom of venerating the relics of the Saints should be censured by English Protestants is inconsistent, or, rather, inexplicable. The remains of great men are buried with pomp and respect; monuments are erected over them. Whatever things belonged to them are venerated as relics—their beds, chairs, manuscripts, walking-sticks, etc. Now, if from purely natural motives these signs of honour are lawfully and laudably given, how much more on account of religious motives may not the same signs and tokens of honour and veneration be given to the relics of the Saints!

We may quote some examples of the relics venerated by Protestants: 'He' (Bunyan) 'was buried in Bunhill Fields, and the spot where he lies is still regarded by the Nonconformists with a feeling which seems scarcely in harmony with the stern spirit of their theology. Many Puritans, to whom the respect paid by Roman Catholics to the relics and tombs of Saints seemed childish and sinful, are said to have begged with their dying breath that their coffins might

[1] Rev. Dr. Rock, 'Hierurgia,' *in loco*, note, p. 403.

be placed as near as possible to the coffin of the author of "The Pilgrim's Progress."[1]

A fragment of the rock on which the deliverer (William III. landing at Torbay) stepped from his boat has been carefully preserved, and is set up as an object of public veneration in the centre of that busy wharf.[2]

The arm-chair of Gustavus Vasa was purchased for 58,000 florins; Nelson's coat for £150; that of Charles XII. for £22,000; a tooth of Nelson for £730; a cane of Voltaire for 500 francs; the vest of Rousseau for 959 francs; the wig of Sterne for 200 guineas; Napoleon's hat for 1,920 francs.[3]

In the *Athenæum*, a weekly journal, of July 16, 1870, an account is given of the sale of the relics of Charles Dickens, the celebrated novelist. These were articles of small value, except as souvenirs; accordingly, they were sold for luxurious prices. A pair of candlesticks, 8 guineas; two small tazze (cups), £16; a pair of hand-screens of feathers, brought from America, 4½ guineas; a small chandelier, eight lights, £40; an envelope case, 9 guineas; an inkstand, £12; a paper-weight, 7 guineas; a French liqueur-case, bottles, etc., 202 guineas. The 118 lots realized £9,414 os. 6d.

'Whatever the Protestant can advance in favour of this custom of honouring and preserving the memorials of the illustrious dead, whether orator or poet, general or statesman, will be advanced with double energy by the Catholic, in defence of the veneration which he exhibits to the relics of the saints.'[4]

5. The authenticity of relics, and the conclusions to be derived from the Church's doctrine, may be illustrated by the example of the Holy Coat of Trèves, which was last

[1] Macaulay's 'History of England.' [2] *Ibid.*, chap. ix.
[3] 'Life of St. Thomas,' by Rev. R. B. Vaughan, vol. i., p. 109.
[4] 'Hierurgia,' *in loco.*

exhibited for the public veneration of the faithful, and visited by pilgrims from all parts of the Catholic world, in 1891. In regard to the celebration, we subjoin a passage from the pastoral issued at the time by the Bishop of Trèves:

'Perhaps you will ask me, my brethren, whether the veneration of the holy relic which our Cathedral possesses be founded on fact: whether we must acknowledge it to be the coat without seam which our Lord Jesus Christ wore upon earth. I think it is my pastoral duty to answer this question to the best of my knowledge and conscience. First of all, we must remember that in this case there is no question at all of an article of faith. It is true that a Catholic, unless his faith has suffered shipwreck, must not doubt in the least that we owe veneration to the relics of our Saviour and of the Saints, and that we justly venerate these relics. But when there is a question about the authenticity of a certain relic in particular, then everybody is perfectly free to form his opinion on sound and reasonable arguments. A Catholic who, wantonly and without grave reasons, doubts or rejects the authenticity of a certain relic may appear arrogant or irreverent, but he is not for that to be considered erring in faith. The authenticity of a relic, like any other historical fact, is founded and proved on the testimony of man. The authenticity of no relic, be it the most eminent of the oldest Church in Christendom, falls under any precept of Catholic faith.' The Bishop then refers to the decree of the Council of Trent, which strictly forbids the public veneration or exhibition of any relic until its authenticity has been vouched for by a decision based on the testimony of pious and learned men, and proceeds to show how this condition has been abundantly verified in the case in question by the constant traditions of the See, and the witness of the most saintly and enlightened of his predecessors.

6. *Conclusion.*—Finally, the position may be summed up in the words of the Very Rev. Canon Moyes:[1]

(1) There is good and reasonable evidence for supposing the relics at Treves and Argenteuil to be genuine.

(2) The genuineness of such relics rests on human or historical evidence. It is no part of Catholic faith; we are not more Catholic when we believe in it, or less Catholic when we doubt it.

(3) Each Catholic is free to examine the evidence for himself, and to believe and act accordingly.

(4) If a number of Catholics believe that the evidence for the genuineness of a given relic is strong and reasonable, they have a perfect right to believe in it, and a right of expressing their belief by devotional veneration. It is a matter of Christian liberty that they should have both the right and the opportunity of doing so. If anyone believes in a relic, and wishes to honour it, and he has reasonable grounds for doing so, who would be justified in hindering him?

(5) When, then, a case has been made out with reasonable grounds in favour of a relic, the Church gives her sanction that an opportunity of venerating it be afforded to the faithful, and in such venerations she directs and expresses their devotion. Were she to do otherwise, she would be trammelling the spiritual liberty of her children.

(6) Moreover, as the honour paid to a relic is *relative*, and not *absolute*, and has for its true and final object the person of whom it is the relic, such honour remains a good and religious work quite independently of any question of the authenticity of the relic on account of which it is given; hence the acts of devotion thus elicited are fittingly encouraged and rewarded by indulgences, without involving thereby any infallible guarantee of the relic's authenticity.

[1] 'The Holy Coat of Trèves.'

7. *Three Facts.*—On the general principle and practice of relics, three facts are useful to be remembered :

(*a*) A dead man was brought to life by touching the bones of a prophet.[1]

(*b*) An woman was cured by touching the hem of our Lord's garment.[2] And the sick were cured by handkerchiefs and aprons brought from the body of St. Paul,[3] and by the shadow of St. Peter.[4]

(*c*) An eye-witness of the martyrdom of St. Ignatius, in the year 107, says : 'For only the more solid parts of his holy relics were left, which were carried to Antioch and wrapped in linen—a priceless treasure bequeathed to the Holy Church through the grace which was in the martyr.'[5]

Few things are more Scriptural, more primitive, or more historical, than the Catholic practice of the veneration of relics.

[1] 4 Kings xiii. 20. [2] St. Matt. ix. 20. [3] Acts xix. 12
[4] Acts v. 15 [5] Martyrdom of St. Ignatius.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VENERATION OF IMAGES.

1. The meaning of an image, and the different forms in which the images of Christ and His Saints may be represented.
2. The religious veneration of sacred images is lawful and useful.
3. The use and veneration of images authorized by Scripture.
4. Proved from antiquity and the traditions of the Church.
5. Proved from the dictates of reason and common-sense.
6. The kind of honour or veneration which we pay to relics and images.
7. The three ways in which an image may be considered.
8. What is prescribed by the rubrics of the Church with regard to the veneration of the images of the Saints.
9. The Cross considered in a threefold respect.
10. Special reasons for venerating the Cross.
11. The use of the sign of the Cross by the Church and by the faithful.
12. The custom of using crucifixes.
13. Holy places and things.

1. 'IMAGE' is derived from 'imitation.' The image of a Saint is his likeness, either painted or sculptured, etc. The image may represent the Saint either simply as a Saint—as when St. Peter is painted with the *aureola*, and without any sign or insignia of his office—or it may represent him with some special sign or circumstance of his life, or of his glory, either proper to him or common to him with some others, which is the special reason, or one of the special reasons, why he is venerated in a particular manner—as when St. Peter is painted with the keys, St. Paul with a sword, St. Michael transfixing the devil, our Lady carrying the

infant Jesus in her arms, Christ at the Last Supper, or on the Cross, or ascending into heaven.

An image of any person or thing may be either *proper*—that is, representing him or it in its own proper form; or *symbolical*—that is, when it represents the original under some symbol: thus, a lamb is painted as the image of Christ, a dove as the image of the Holy Ghost. In the same way death is painted as a skeleton, the devil as a serpent, an angel as a man, or a head only with wings, etc.

2. The religious veneration of sacred images is lawful and useful. The first proof of this we may take from the definition of the Council of Trent,[1] which commands Bishops to teach that 'the images of Christ, of the Mother of God, and of the other Saints, may be had and retained, especially in the temples, and that due honour and veneration be given them; not that it is believed that there is any virtue or divinity in them for which they are to be venerated, or that anything is to be asked from them, or that confidence is to be placed in images, as the Gentiles did of old, who placed their hope in idols; but as the honour shown to them is referred to their prototypes which they represent, so that through the images which we have, or before which we uncover or bow the head, we adore Christ and venerate the Saints whose likeness they are.'

3. The use and veneration of images is authorized by Scripture:

(1) Beseleel, according to the command of God, made two cherubim, to be placed over the propitiatory of the Ark.[2]

(2) Moses, by the command of God, erected the brazen figure of the fiery serpent in the desert, that the people looking at it might be freed from the poison of their wounds.[3]

(3) In the description of Solomon's temple, we read of that prince, not only that he made in the oracle two

[1] Sess. XXV. [2] Exod. xxxvii. 7. [3] Numb. xxi. 8.

cherubim of olive-tree, of ten cubits in height, but that all the wall of the temple round about he carved with divers figures and carvings.[1]

(4) The Ark of the Covenant which God ordered Moses to paint was a sacred image, or, rather, a sacred symbol.[2] In the first book of Paralipomenon, we observe that when David imposed his injunction upon Solomon to realize his intention of building the house of the Lord, he delivered to him a description of the porch and temple, and concluded by thus assuring him : *All these things come to me written by the hand of the Lord, that I might understand all the works of the pattern.*[3]

The isolated fact that images were not only directed by Almighty God to be placed in the Mosaic tabernacle, and in the more sumptuous temple of Jerusalem, but that He Himself exhibited the pattern of them, will be alone sufficient to authorize the practice of the Catholic Church in regard to a similar observance.[4]

4. The proposition that the religious veneration of images is lawful may be proved from antiquity and the traditions of the Church. In the Roman Catacombs are to be seen innumerable monuments, as well as religious pictures and images of every kind, both proper and also symbolical of things and sacred persons—such as of Christ our Lord in the various mysteries of His life and passion, of the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles and martyrs. From these we may easily conclude the practice of the primitive Christians with regard to the veneration of images.

Concerning the paintings in the Roman Catacombs, Flaxman, who studied at Rome several years, observes : 'Even during the reign of those emperors by whom Christians were cruelly persecuted, when they were obliged

[1] 3 Kings vi. 23, 29. [2] Exod. xxv. 10. [3] 1 Paral. xxviii. 11-19.
[4] 'Hierurgia,' p. 535.

to perform their sacred worship in subterranes and sepulchral chambers, they ornamented those retreats with sacred portraits and subjects from Scripture.'[1]

5. Thirdly, we have common-sense and reason, dictating the lawfulness and the utility of the veneration of sacred images. Words and names are only signs and passing images of the things signified (and we may say the same of thoughts), and we venerate them, and why not, therefore, the permanent images? Who does not honour the Holy Name of Jesus, at which, according to St. Paul, every knee of those that are in heaven or earth and under the earth is to bend?[2] Who does not honour a book which contains the Sacred Scriptures? Why not, therefore, sacred statues and pictures?

That pictures and images in churches are particularly serviceable in informing the minds of the humbler classes, and for such a purpose possess a superiority over words themselves, is certain.

> 'What through the ear conveyed will never find
> Its way with so much quickness to the mind
> As that, when faithful eyes are messengers,
> Unto himself the fixed spectator bears.'[3]

The remark of a heathen poet is corroborated by the observation of the most celebrated amongst ancient and modern Christian writers. So persuaded was St. Paulinus of Nola, fourteen hundred years ago, of the efficacy possessed by paintings for conveying useful lessons of instruction, that he adorned with a variety of sacred subjects the walls of the church which he erected and dedicated to God in honour of St. Felix.

> 'To us it seemed a useful work to paint
> With sacred scenes the temple of this saint.'

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[1] Flaxman, 'Lectures on Sculpture,' p. 302. [2] Phil. ii. 10.
[3] Horatius 'De Arte Poetica,' v. 180; apud 'Hierurgia.'

Religious feelings are caused by images. This the Christian poet Prudentius expresses, referring to his visit to the tomb of the holy martyr Cassianus.[1]

'Prone to the ground, the sacred tomb I press'd,
With many a tear my sorrow I express'd,
For all my sins a grief my heart did wring.
Upwards I gazed—before me shone the scene.
Wrought in fair colours by the painter's art,
That told so well the cruel martyring
Of blessed Cassian by the schoolboy's dart.'

Arrived in Rome, Prudentius observed and applauded the piety which induced its citizens to ornament the tombs of the martyrs. The Church of St. Hippolytus particularly attracted the poet's attention, and he has described with much minuteness the paintings which decorated that Christian hero's tomb.

'The painted wall, with many a tint that glows,
Reveals the horror of the impious deed,
And o'er his tomb proclaims the martyr's throes,
Imagining each tortured limb to bleed.'

We learn from the above reasons why the Church makes use of sacred images.

We Catholics adorn our altars and our churches with the pictures and images of Christ and His sainted servants, and preserve them with decent and with pious respect, not only through a reverence for their illustrious prototypes, but that the sight of them may recall to our remembrance those heroic virtues which make their lives so celebrated, and quicken us, if not to emulate, at least to follow their example at an humble distance by some faint imitation of their holiness.

[1] He was a schoolmaster, and suffered death under Julian the Apostate. His own scholars were selected to be the executioners of his martyrdom. The youths were directed to surround and stab their teacher with their styles, or metal pens, with which it was then the custom to write. They learned to write upon little tablets of wood covered with wax. His body is still venerated at Imola, under the high altar of the cathedral ('Hierurgia,' in note, p. 547).

The loyal subject or the patriot who ornaments his residence with the portrait of his sovereign, or of those amongst his fellow-citizens whose achievements in the field or whose abilities in the senate, however infamous a character they may have borne through private life, have won for them the admiration of their countrymen, cannot surely advance any reasonable objection against the conduct of the Catholic for rendering in his churches a similar homage to the *Author and Finisher of his faith, Christ Jesus*,[1] and to such amongst His disciples as have shed a glory round His religion by the lustre of their brilliant virtues, or have carried the tidings of it to the heathen, and recorded with their life-blood, in presence of the tyrant and the persecutor, their intrepid adherence to all its doctrines.[2]

6. We have now to examine the question as to the kind or species of honour or veneration which we pay to relics or images. On this question there are three opinions that it is necessary to refer to. The first is that of Durandus, which asserts that images are not to be adored except in an improper sense ; that is, in their presence the remembrance of the exemplars and originals is excited, and it is these only that are adored in the presence of the image. Suarez calls this opinion dangerous and temerarious, and says that it smacks of heresy, and that it is therefore rejected by Catholic theologians in general. The second opinion teaches that images are to be honoured in themselves and in their own proper *esse*, but with an honour inferior to that given to the exemplar or prototype, which honour, however, appertains only analogically to the kind of honour due to the exemplar in the same relation as an imperfect species to a perfect ; and therefore that no image should be adored with *latria*. This is the opinion of Bellarmine. The third opinion, which is according to the teach-

[1] Heb. xii. 2. [2] 'Hierurgia,' p. 544

ing of St. Thomas, is that the same *cultus* or honour should be given to the image as to the *exemplar*, but in a different manner—the exemplar is to be venerated for itself, but the image for the *exemplar*—that is, the absolute *cultus* is to be given to the *exemplar*, and the *relative* to the image, so that from the exemplar and the image one total object of adoration is formed.

7. To solve objections and difficulties that may arise out of these various views or opinions of theologians, we may note that an image may be considered in many ways: 1. *Materially*—that is, considered as the gold or silver or wood out of which it has been formed. 2. As it is a holy thing. 3. *Formally* as an image—that is, as it actually represents and manifests the prototype or exemplar. Under the first consideration no adoration or veneration is to be given to an image, as it is unworthy of all religious veneration in this respect; under the second consideration the opinion of Bellarmine is to be followed; and under the third consideration the opinion of St. Thomas is the one to be adopted.

The second and third opinions in the same sense are applicable to the veneration of relics. That is, as sacred things they are to be honoured with a veneration inferior to that paid to the prototype; but in so far as they may be considered as forming with it one total object on account of which they are venerated, then to the relic is to be given a *cultus* of the same kind as that given to the original, but *relative* to the relic always, and *absolute* to the prototype.

Hence the Holy Name of Jesus, the images and relics of Christ, such as the cross, the nails, the lance, etc., are to be honoured with the *relative latria*. The images and relics of the Blessed Virgin are to be honoured with *relative hyperdulia*, and the images and relics of the Saints with *relative dulia*.

'The spirit of the Church in honouring images may be ascertained from the motives which induce her to exhibit a respect to the Cross and the Book of the Gospels. It must be evident to everyone that, by kneeling before the Cross, we adore Him *who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree*.[1] If we stand up, from motives of respect, when the Book of the Gospels is carried past us, or when any portion of it is recited; if we kiss it in a court of justice, or during the celebration of Mass; if we carry lights before it, or perfume it with incense, such manifestations of religious honour are not rendered to a piece of wood, but to Him who died upon the Cross to save us; not to the ink and paper of a book, but to the Word of God, and those eternal truths which are propounded to us in the sacred volume.'[2]

8. According to the rubrics and rites of the Church, it is not lawful to adore with public *cultus* holy persons, except those who have been canonized or beatified by the Church. And if they are not yet canonized or beatified, it is forbidden to erect churches or altars in their honour, to have lamps burning before their tombs, to invoke them publicly in the litanies, to expose their relics for veneration, or to carry them in procession.

A servant of God departed, whom on account of miracles or a holy life or martyrdom, or for some other reason, we have to acknowledge as a Saint, though not yet declared to be a Saint by the Church, may be honoured by what is known as private *cultus*, or veneration, even though in the act we may be seen by others; or the *cultus* may be made in the presence of others: thus, to kiss the relics of the servants of God, to have their images in the house, to say prayers before their pictures, to make a vow or fast in their

[1] Pet. ii. 24.

[2] 'Hierurgia,' p. 542.

honour, are all acts of private devotion and *cultus*, and do not fall under the prohibition of the Church, because not done in the name of the Church nor reputed acts of public worship.

Pictures of these servants of God not yet beatified must not be hung over altars where Mass is celebrated, even in private oratories. This is forbidden by a decree of the Sacred Congregation under Alexander VII. And it is also forbidden by a prohibition of Urban VIII. to paint the images of such servants of God with the rays or aureola of glory.

The Cross.

We think it proper to treat specially of the Cross, or the crucifix, as it is the emblem of our redemption, and amongst all other holy things the one that claims our special love and veneration.

9. The Cross may be considered in a threefold respect : (1) The true Cross itself, that very wood on which Christ was suspended. (2) The image of the Cross, either painted or sculptured, either with or without the figure of Christ. (3) The sign of the Cross with which the faithful sign themselves, and which priests make such frequent use of in the celebration of Mass, in the administration of the Sacraments, and in all their blessings.

As the Cross and its particles are true relics, and as the Cross and the crucifix are images of Jesus Christ crucified, and represent to us the most holy mystery of religion, the arguments above cited for relics and images apply to them, and serve with greater force to show the religious veneration which we should pay to them.

By the sign of the Cross is understood that which we form with the right hand on the forehead, or in the air, or on ourselves in blessing ourselves, or over any person or thing.

This sign is a true though passing image of the true Cross, and in this light all Catholics regard it.

10. The following special reasons for venerating the Cross may be appropriately cited in this place.

(1) Although every, even the least, action of Christ was infinitely meritorious and satisfactory—sufficient to satisfy for the sins of all men—Christ, however, ordained that all these actions should not have their consummation or their ultimate complement or result except in His death upon the Cross. Hence to the death of Christ is especially attributed our redemption, and Christ is said to have redeemed us by His Cross: *And I, if I be exalted from the earth, shall draw all nations to Myself.*[1]

(2) The Cross was the altar on which was offered the sacrifice of Christ, in which all the figures and types of the Old Testament were perfectly fulfilled, and which is commemorated by all nations as the principal instrument of the Passion.

(3) The sign of the Cross is a short and open profession of the Christian faith; he who signs himself with the Cross thereby declares that he is a disciple of Christ, that he regards Him as his Saviour, and that he professes His faith and religion.

(4) Not only is the sign of the Cross a short and open profession of faith, but the Cross is proposed by Christ Himself as the symbol and summary of the whole life of His disciples according to His example and precepts: *He that taketh not up his Cross and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me.*[2] And He observed to His disciples: *If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.*[3]

(5) It is the terror of the demons, and puts them to flight. Suarez teaches that the efficacy of the sign of the

[1] St. John xii. 35. [2] St. Matt. x. 38. [3] *Ibid.* xvi. 24.

Cross is not derived merely from the devotion and merit of the person using it, but chiefly from the Divine ordinance, and on account of the merits of Christ and His honour. They (the demons) are compelled by the Divine authority to revere this sign and tremble at its presence. Cardinal Bellarmine says that the demon, when he sees the Cross, immediately remembers that he was overcome, despoiled, bound, and disabled by the Cross of Christ.

(6) 'The Evangelist, in his enumeration of those terrible prognostics which are to herald the coming day of final judgment, mentions the appearance of the Cross amid the heavens, where the sun shall then be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and whence the stars shall have fallen: *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty.* All the most learned and ancient Fathers, as St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Hilary, and Theophylactus, and Venerable Bede, are unanimous in interpreting the *sign of the Son of man* to signify the Cross; and the ablest among our Biblical scholars have applauded such an interpretation.'[1]

11. Hence, the Church makes use of the sign of the Cross in conferring and administering all the Sacraments, and in nearly all the blessings to be given either to persons or to things. Hence, the custom has always existed amongst the faithful of signing themselves with the sign of the Cross at certain times, especially on rising in the morning and going to rest at night, before and after meals; and this is narrated by Tertullian, who, writing in the year 194 of this practice, observes: 'At every step and movement, whenever we come in or go out, when we dress ourselves or prepare to go abroad, at the bath, or table, when lights are brought in, in

[1] 'Hierurgia,' p. 504.

lying or sitting down, whatever we be doing, we make the sign of the Cross upon our foreheads.'

The Christian poet Prudentius, who wrote towards the decline of the fourth century, notices the Catholic practice of making the sign of the Cross in the following verses:

'When sleep steals on, you go to rest,
And the chaste couch you've scarcely prest,
Oh, let the Cross's figure sign
That forehead and that heart of thine!
The Cross drives every harm away;
Darkness ne'er will bide its stay.
Marked with this sacred sign the mind,
To fluctuate you'll never find.'

12. *The Custom of using Crucifixes.*—The most ancient memorial we have of any image of our Divine Redeemer hanging on the Cross is furnished by Lactantius (A.D. 306), or whoever was the author of the poem 'De Passione Domini,' which certainly bears upon its style the impress of the fourth century. The poet says:

Whoe'er thou art that seek'st this temple's bound,
Arrest thy step, and ere thou gazest round,
Oh, look on Me! Without one fault of Mine,
I suffered for thy sinfulness, thy crime.
Mark how these hands with savage nails are bor'd,
These limbs distent, this back with lashes gor'd.
See where the lance has probed my heaving side;
See how the wound pours forth a crimson tide;
See how these feet of Mine are dug, and how
Blood stains each limb and trickles from My brow.'

From these lines we may collect that, not only, at the period when the author composed them, was it usual to have crucifixes and images of our Saviour which did not differ in the smallest trifle from the form according to which those are fashioned which we now employ, but also that these representations of our crucified Redeemer were placed in churches.

As the altar is the emblem of Mount Calvary, the Cross supporting the figure of the dead Christ is erected in the

centre of it, to call to remembrance that it was Jesus Christ Who paid the ransom of our sins with His most precious blood. *There is no other name under heaven whereby we must be saved.*[1] The religious feelings caused by looking at the crucifix cannot be better expressed than in the words of the author of 'Hierurgia'[2]: 'That virgin brow of Christ enwreathed with thorns; those lips disparted, not with plaintiveness, but sighing forth a supplication and a pardon for His executioners with their latest breath; that serenity of agonizing painfulness; those feet and hands bored through with rugged nails; that blood welling from His open side; and, as we stand gazing on the *Word made flesh*, those whispers of the still, inward voice of conscience that upbraid us: I, too, joined to crucify my God! Yes, all this possesses a sad, a silent, but a powerful eloquence, that speaks to the heart of the most giddy worldling, and finds its way to the intelligence of the learned philosopher, as well as to the comprehension of the lowly, uneducated rustic.'

I think it also most instructive to quote from the same author[3] a description of the inconsistency of Protestantism with regard to the veneration of images:

'It is curious to observe the infatuation of prejudice. Such portions of the Word of God as bore the appearance of condemning the custom of employing images were eagerly selected and written on the walls of the church by those very persons who immediately after set up the figures of Moses and Aaron holding the tables of the law, which it was pretended contained the prohibition, and who removed the crucifixes in order to substitute in its place the insignia of royalty; or, in other words, who pulled down the symbol of Jesus and the sign of humility, to make room for the symbol of a man and the emblem of worldly grandeur.

[1] Acts iv. 12. [2] P. 549. [3] P. 556.

James I. was so forcibly struck with this impropriety that he observed to the Scottish Bishops, who objected to his ornamenting his chapel at Edinburgh with statues and paintings: "You can endure lions and dragons (the supporters of the royal arms) and devils (the armorial griffins of Queen Elizabeth) to be figured in your churches, but will not allow the like place to patriarchs and prophets." Protestants can discern in various texts a condemnation of the Catholic custom of adorning their churches with paintings and statues, and yet in total disregard of their own principles they embellish their Common Prayer books with many images of the Saints. [And, it may be added, in our day we see golden crosses on their hymn-books, crimson crosses on their Bibles, little wooden crosses on their mantel pieces and drawing-room tables, golden crosses on men's watch-chains, and crosses of jet hanging from ladies' necks.] A modern writer tells us that he has in his possession a book of Common Prayer decorated with a number of such engravings. That man must be endowed with most penetrating logical acumen who can distinguish it to be idolatrous, and contradictory to Scripture, to ornament with images the temple we pray in, but perfectly harmless—nay, useful—to do so with regard to the book we pray from.'

13. *Holy Places and Things.*—Besides relics and images, there are other things which Catholics regard as sacred and worthy of respect and veneration. Such are: (1) *Holy places*, as, for example, the place where our Saviour was born, where He was crucified, and the place from which He ascended into heaven, etc.; likewise all those places in which remarkable miracles have been wrought. (2) Temples, churches, and other things destined to the public worship of God and for the use of religion, especially if they be consecrated or blessed, such as chalices, vestments, rosaries, holy-water, etc.

Of these things it may be said: (1) Only relative veneration is to be paid to them. (2) The veneration is to be greater or less as the objects are more sacred or more esteemed for some special reason; as, for example, a holy shrine or place at which we receive the grace of being cured of a malady. The objects are esteemed as more or less sacred under various considerations; as, for example, if they are blessed or consecrated; if blessed or consecrated by the Pope; if they bear special respect or relation to God, to the Blessed Virgin, or to this or that particular Saint. (3) Those signs of veneration or religious respect are to be given to them which are prescribed by the use and rubrics of the Church. Thus, the priest, in vesting himself for Mass, kisses the figure of the Cross on the amice, maniple, and stole; men uncover their heads in the Church; a consecrated chalice must not be touched by a secular, ect. (4) All blessed things have to be treated with negative veneration at least; that is, it would be wrong and sinful to treat them with irreverence or show any irreverence towards them. (5) As to places, we have to note that either the place is one in which some celebrated miracle was wrought, so that, by common consent, it is set apart as a place where nothing profane must be allowed; or it is a place in which, even though long ago, great miracles and mysteries were wrought, and yet in which the common business of every-day life is transacted, such as the Holy Land, or parts of it, Jerusalem, Mount Olivet, etc. To the former places one may pay the common signs of reverence which are customary with the faithful. The latter places may also be lawfully and with pious affection visited, contemplated, and vene rated. In illustration of this feeling and devotion for holy places, we may quote from Dr. Johnson's work, entitled 'A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland,' in which he thus speaks of Iona: 'We were now treading that illustrious

island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. . . . Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.'[1]

[1] See Dr. Murray's treatise, 'De Veneratione et Invocatione Sanctorum,' etc.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER V.

ON WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.—VICES OPPOSED TO RELIGION.

1. The text of the Ten Commandments according to the Catholic and the Protestant division.
2. Why the division adopted by the Church is to be preferred.
3. The sins forbidden by this commandment, according to the division given by St. Alphonsus in the 'Homo Apostolicus.' Vices opposed to religion by excess.
4. Superstition: its definition and division.
5. Idolatry: its definition and division.
6. It is a most grave sin—bad of its own nature.
7. Punishments of idolatry in the old law.
8. A brief reference to the history of idolatry, especially amongst the Israelites.
9. The objects of idolatrous worship.
10. Spiritual idolatry and its three principal sources.
11. The iconoclasts.

1. BEFORE entering upon the various vices and sins against this commandment, I think it necessary again to revert to the Catholic division of the Decalogue. The commandment which, according to the Catholic enumeration, is considered as the first is improperly divided into two precepts by Protestants. Hence it not infrequently happens amongst Protestants, even of intelligence and information, that we are accused of omitting what they call the second commandment, to apologize for our pretending worship of idols.

I here subjoin, side by side, the text of the commandment according to the Catholic and Protestant division:

First Commandment in the Catholic Division of the Decalogue.

1. Thou shalt not have strange gods in My sight. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that abides in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, and thou shalt not serve them. For I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me. And showing mercy unto thousands to them that love Me and keep My commandments.

First and Second Commandments in the Protestant Division of the Decalogue.

1. Thou shalt have none other gods but Me.

2. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and show mercy unto thousands in them that love Me and keep My commandments.

2. The Scripture, while it assures us that the words of the law were ten, nowhere furnishes us with the manner in which they were divided. The division of the commandments is therefore left to the Church, and is in itself a matter of inferior importance. The division adopted by the Church is to be preferred to the Protestant arrangement, because the prohibition to make idols, or to adore them, is an explanation and a consequence of adoring one only true God, and not having strange gods before Him, and should therefore be joined with it in one commandment.

'These cursory observations, it is trusted, will disabuse the reader of any erroneous preconceptions he may heretofore have entertained concerning the doctrine and the practice of the Catholic Church in the employment of images. Such observations will have helped him to detect the calumnious accusations of those amongst her adversaries who unhesitatingly prefer against her, without ever ascertaining the truth of their denunciation, the serious charge of

having mutilated and abridged the Decalogue in order to keep out of sight a condemnation of idolatry; for such is the language which some zealots employ to designate a rite which is so harmless, as if such an erasure in the commandments could justify the crime in the eyes of any Catholic, or tranquillize his conscience. They will have satisfied him, too, that, instead of being forbidden, the use of images is positively recommended by the Word of God; and he will conclude that the utility of these religious memorials is evident, as they serve to call to our remembrance some of the most sacred mysteries taught by our religion, help to confine our thoughts from wandering at the time of prayer, and, while they point towards heaven, read silently to us the sufferings and the death upon the altar of the Cross of a God made man—our Jesus, our crucified Redeemer.'[1]

3. Having prefixed these explanatory remarks, we have now to consider the sins that are forbidden by this commandment. St. Alphonsus, in the 'Homo Apostolicus,' tells us that two classes of vices or sins are opposed to religion—namely, superstition, by excess; and irreligion, by defect.

Superstition contains under it three species of vices or sins—namely, *idolatry*, *divination*, and *vain observance*.

Irreligion contains under it four species—namely, *temptation* of God, *sacrilege*, *simony*, and *perjury*.

I think, for the sake of clearness, I cannot do better than treat of these various vices after the order followed by St. Alphonsus:

The Vices opposed to Religion by Excess.

4. *Superstition*.—This, according to St. Thomas, is a vice opposed to religion by excess, not that it can give more to the Divine worship than the true religion, but because it

[1] 'Hierurgia,' pp. 563, 564.

offers Divine worship to that to which it is not due, or in a manner in which it is not due. Hence it is twofold: Firstly, the superstition of undue worship; secondly, the worship of an unworthy thing or object.

The first—namely, the superstition of *undue worship*, or of offering worship in an undue manner—would be: (1) By giving a false worship to God, such as if a layman should attempt to say Mass; or to offer false relics for veneration; or to pretend false visions, revelations, miracles, or other such inventions, in order even to increase devotion, all which things are mortal sins of their own nature (*in genere suo*). (2) By offering to God a superfluous worship, such as to hear the Mass of a priest of a certain name—*e.g.*, Botavius, Asaph, or the like—or to pray with face turned to the east, to add to the Mass or the Divine Office by way of improving them: these, in small matters, are only venial sins, unless there be the intention of introducing a new rite into the Church against her authority. Secondly, the superstition of the worship of an undue or unworthy object, person, or thing, would be to give the honour which is due to God alone to any creature, either directly or indirectly.

The first species of this superstition is *idolatry*. This leads us to the question, What is idolatry?

5. Idolatry is to pay Divine honour or worship to a creature. The word 'idol,' in Greek ειδωλον, is derived from ειδω, I see, which may mean either with the eyes of the body or of the mind. In general, it signifies a statue or an image that represents God, and idolatry is the worship paid to such an image. In the theological and strict sense, idolatry is worship rendered to a sensible object, either natural or made, in which one supposes a false God. It is threefold:

(1) *Perfect*—when a person thinks a creature to be God, or worthy of the honour due to God, and pays or gives

Divine worship to that creature. This is opposed to religion and to faith at the same time.

(2) *Imperfect*—when a person, not from error, but through a perverse will, out of hatred and formal contempt for God, or from an inordinate desire of obtaining some favour, pays Divine worship to the devil or some other creature. This is a most grave sin, and even worse than the first, because committed with greater knowledge and greater malice.

(3) The third is *simulated*, or merely external idolatry—that is, when a man, not from error or from a bad will, but merely through fear of a tyrant, for example, gives Divine honour to a creature; that is, the external signs of worship. This is a lie in religious worship, very injurious to God, and scandalous in the eyes of men.

Besides the above, which mean formal idolatry, there may be what is called *material* idolatry, which is not culpable. This might happen through ignorance or mistake, as, for example, if a priest were to expose for adoration at Benediction an unconsecrated Host.

6. Idolatry is a most grave sin, and does not admit of light matter. This is evident from the commandment itself: Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. *Because it is like the sin of witchcraft to rebel; and like the crime of idolatry to refuse to obey. Forasmuch, therefore, as thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord hath also rejected thee from being king.*[1] We have also the words of Moses, addressed to the Israelites after their acts of idolatry: *You have sinned a very great sin.*[2] And St. Paul tells us, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians: *Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Do not err; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, shall possess the kingdom of God.*[3]

[1] 1 Kings xv. 23, words of Samuel to Saul.
[2] Exod. xxxii. 30. [3] 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

It need not take long to prove the enormity of this crime. If we regard it as a crime worthy of death to be guilty of treason against a lawful sovereign, or to seek to wickedly dethrone him, is it not a thousand times more criminal to bring our treason against the throne of God, in order to show rebellion against His power, and to put a vain idol in His place?

It was one of those crimes that was most severely punished by the Divine law in the days of the old dispensation.

7. *Punishment of Idolatry.*—'If one of the main objects of the Hebrew polity was to teach the unity of God, the extermination of idolatry was but a subordinate end. Jehovah, the God of the Israelites, was the head of the State. He was the theocratic King of the people, who had delivered them from bondage, and to whom they had taken a willing oath of allegiance. Idolatry, therefore, to an Israelite was a State offence, a political crime of the gravest character, high treason against the majesty of his King. But it was much more than all this. While the idolatry of foreign nations is stigmatized merely as an abomination in the sight of God, which called for His vengeance, the sin of the Israelites is regarded as of a more glaring enormity and greater moral guilt. . . . Individuals and communities were equally amenable to the rigorous code. The individual offender was devoted to destruction;[1] his nearest relatives were not only bound to denounce him and deliver him up to punishment,[2] but their hands were to strike the first blow, when, on the testimony of two witnesses at least, he was stoned.[3] To attempt to seduce others to false worship was a crime of equal enormity.[4]

Othe. specific punishments of the Old Law for the

[1] Exod. xxii. 20. [2] Deut. xiii. 2-10. [3] *Ibid.* xvii. 2-5.
[4] Deut. xiii. 6-10. See Smith's 'Bible Dictionary.'

crime of idolatry may be referred to. Of the Israelites who adored the golden calf: *There were slain that day about three-and-twenty thousand men.*[1] And of the same people twenty-four thousand men were slain who were called by the daughters of Moab to their sacrifices, and who did eat of them and adored their gods. *Upon which the Lord, being angry, said to Moses: Take all the princes of the people, and hang them up on gibbets against the sun, that My fury may be turned away from Israel.*[2]

We have also the case of Jeroboam, who, by erecting two calves in Dan and Bethel, sinned, and made Israel to sin; and on this account the Lord gave up Israel to her enemies, and appointed another king, and in various other ways punished Jeroboam and Israel. Also Solomon, Achab, Manasses, and many other kings, both of Judah and Israel, together with the people, were punished for this sin. *And the Lord cast off all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hands of spoilers, till He cast them away from His face. Even from that time, when Israel was sent from the house of David, and made Jeroboam, son of Nabat, their king; for Jeroboam separated Israel from the Lord, and made them commit a great sin. And the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, which he had done; and they departed not from them.*[3]

8. It may be useful, for the purpose of understanding the horrible wickedness and depravity of this crime, to refer to its history, especially amongst the Israelites, and to the objects of idolatry or the false gods that were set up for adoration. It would appear that idolatry was practised at a very early period after the beginning of the world, from the words of Josue addressed to the Israelites. *And he spoke thus to the people: Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel:*

[1] Exod. xxxii. 28. [2] Numb. xxv. 3, 4.
[3] 4 Kings xvii. 20 *et seq.*

Your fathers dwelt of old on the other side of the river, Thare, the father of Abraham, and Nachor: and they served strange gods.[1] And in the account which Achior gives to Holofernes of the people of Israel he states that, forsaking the ceremonies of their fathers, which consisted in the worship of many gods, they worshipped one God of heaven. Instance the example of Nimrod, Laban, and many others.

The first undoubted allusion to idolatry or idolatrous customs in the Bible is in the account of Rachel's stealing her father's idols,[2] a relic of the worship of other gods whom the ancestors of the Israelites served; . . . these Laban consulted as oracles, though without entirely losing sight of the God of Abraham and the God of Nachor, to whom he appealed when occasion offered, while he was ready, in the presence of Jacob, to acknowledge the benefits conferred upon him by Jehovah.[3] Such, indeed, was the character of most of the idolatrous worship of the Israelites. Like the Cuthean colonists in Samaria who feared Jehovah and served their own gods, they blended in a strange manner a theoretical belief in the true God with the external reverence which they were led to pay to the idols of the nations by whom they were surrounded. During their long residence in Egypt, the country of symbolism, they defiled themselves with the idols of the land, and it was long before the taint was removed. To these gods Moses, as the herald of Jehovah, flung down the gauntlet of defiance, and the plagues of Egypt smote their symbolic idols.

Soon after the deliverance we find Aaron lending himself to the popular cry, and making an idol with which the people had long been familiar—the calf, embodiment of Apis, and emblem of the productive power of nature. During the remainder of the march through the desert, and during the lives of Josue and the elders who out-

[1] Josue xxiv. 2. [2] Gen. xxxi. 19. [3] *Ibid.* xxxi. 53.

lived him, the Israelites kept faithful to their allegiance to the one true and living God ; but the generations following, who knew not Jehovah, nor the works He had done for Israel, swerved from the plain path of their fathers, and were caught in the toils of the foreigner. From this time forth their history becomes little more than a chronicle of the inevitable sequence of offence and punishment.[1]

9. *The objects of idolatry* may interest us as well as prove to us the depravity of both the ancient and modern forms of this sin. I may extract the following from Smith's 'Bible Dictionary' as the most concise summary at hand of the various objects of idolatrous worship : 'In the old religion of the Semitic races, the Deity, following human analogy, was conceived as of male and female—the one representing the active, the other the passive, principle of nature ; the former the source of spiritual, the latter of physical life. The sun and moon were early selected as outward symbols of this all-pervading power, and the worship of the heavenly bodies was not only the most ancient, but the most prevalent system of idolatry. Taking its rise in the plains of Chaldea, it spread through Egypt, Greece, Scythia, and even Mexico and Ceylon. It is probable that the Israelites learned their first lessons in sun-worship from the Egyptians, in whose religious system that luminary, as Osiris, held a prominent place. The Phœnicians worshipped him under the title of the "Lord of Heaven." As Molech or Milcom, the sun was worshipped by the Ammonites, and as Chemosh by the Moabites. The Hadad of the Syrians is the same deity. The Assy Bel or Belus is another form of Baal. By the later kings of Judah sacred horses and chariots were dedicated to the sun-god, as by the Persians. The moon was worshipped by the Phœnicians under the name of Astarte or Baaltis, the passive power of nature, as Baal was the

[1] See Smith's 'Bible Dictionary.'

active, and known to the Hebrews as Ashteroth. Ashteroth, the tutelary goddess of the Zidonians, appears early among the objects of Israelitish idolatry. In the later times of the monarchy the planets or zodiacal signs received, next to the sun and moon, their share of popular adoration. Beast-worship, as exemplified in the calves of Jeroboam, has already been alluded to. There is no actual proof that the Israelites ever joined in the service of Dagon, the fish-god of the Philistines. . . . And in latter times the brazen serpent became the object of idolatrous worship.[1]

'Of pure hero-worship among the Semitic races we find no trace.'

The crime of idolatry, in its real sense, is not found amongst Christians; but there is a species of spiritual idolatry against which we are continually warned. St. Bernardine of Sienna has said that it is ridiculous to consider a man as an idolater who offers to a creature two small grains of incense which he should have offered to the Creator, and not to consider as such the man who consecrates all his life to the service of the world, and offers nothing to his Lord.

10. This spiritual idolatry has three principal sources, namely, avarice, pride, and voluptuousness, according to the words of St. John: *For all that is in the world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world.*[2]

In connection with idolatry, we may notice another species of error, sinning by excess in the opposite direction; that is, the error of those who condemn the Catholic practice of the religious veneration of images as idolatrous, and therefore encourage the breaking and destruction of all religious statues and pictures. These are called Iconoclasts.

[1] 4 Kings xviii. 4. [2] 1 St. John ii. 16.

11. The Iconoclasts flourished in the eighth century, and they reprobated the use and veneration of sacred images as if they were idols, maintaining that they should be removed from all churches, be held up to derision and execration, and be abolished by fire and sword. These were condemned in the second Council of Nice, the seventh General Council, held in the year 787. This extinct error of the Iconoclasts was revived in the twelfth century by the Albigenses; in the fourteenth century by the Wiclifites; and in the sixteenth by the Lutherans and Calvinists—all whose errors on this point were condemned by the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent.

CHAPTER VI.

ON WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT: DIVINATION.

1. Divination: its meaning and division.
2. Astrology—that known as judiciary unlawful; natural astrology lawful.
3. Examples from Rev. Fr. Müller to show how false and mistaken may be the observations of learned astrologers.
4. Other unlawful and superstitious means of predicting future contingent things.
5. Numerous forms of divination mentioned in the Old Testament, some of which were practised even in our Lord's time.
6. What kind of sin is divination? (1) Express divination. (2) Tacit divination. (3) Divining by the cries and flights of birds. (4) By consulting fortune-tellers. (5) By casting lots. (6) By dreams.

1. *Divination.*—Of sins contrary to the virtue of religion, after idolatry, we have to speak of divination.

Divination is a seeking to know hidden things, either past, present, or future, by diabolical means, or through the agency or influence of evil spirits.

It may be either *express*, by direct invocation, or an express compact with the devil. This would be the case were a person, by express words or signs, to invoke the co-operation of the devil for the purpose of knowing some secret or hidden thing. Or it may be *tacit;* that is, by an indirect or implied invocation or agreement, as when a person endeavours to find out hidden things by improportionate and un-

lawful means—that is, by means which cannot naturally indicate the thing, or which have no power of doing so either from Nature or from God. Both these kinds of *divination* have various species. The following are some of the principal ones, that are the most generally known, and to which people more frequently have or have had recourse.

2. *Astrology* (*the species of it known as judiciary—'judiciaria'*).—This word is derived from ἀστὴρ, a star, and λογος, a word—the science of the stars. This judiciary astrology means the art of predicting the future of men and their destinies by the inspection of the stars. It assumes to forecast the fate of nations and of individuals, and the changes in the elements, from the aspect of the heavenly bodies, especially of the stars. Hence the expressions, *born under a lucky star, bless my stars!* etc.

Besides this unlawful kind of astrology, there is what is called natural astrology, or the science of the stars. This is a science by which, from the disposition of the stars, one may divine certain natural effects, either necessarily to happen, as eclipses, changes of the planets, etc., or contingently only, and as impedible by other natural causes, such as tempests and the like. This science is of itself perfectly lawful; and if an astrologer occasionally exceeds in his confidence and certitude, he is not on that account to be regarded as superstitious, but only as guilty of telling a lie, or of levity or imprudence.

But the *judiciary astrology* is quite different, inasmuch as it pretends, from the aspect of the stars, to predict events that are fortuitous and dependent on the free will of man. This species of astrology is altogether unlawful, and heretical, in so far that it denies, by injuring or destroying in its theories, human liberty.

As a rule, people put very little faith in these predictions, as it is generally known that they are often preposterous, and

more frequently false than true, as exemplified in the annual predictions of 'Old Moore's Almanack.' It is not, however, an easy matter to change the views of some even learned and scientific astrologers in this matter, and such men may read with interest the following examples, which I quote from the Rev. Fr. Müller, C.SS.R.[1]

3. The first example refers to a circumstance that occurred to one of St. Augustine's friends called Fimensis, who related it to the saint in these terms: 'My father was so superstitious, that some time before I came into the world, he consulted the stars in order to read my fortune. He had a friend who was addicted to astrology no less than himself; this friend likewise consulted the stars for one of his domestics, who was on the point of giving birth to a child. They agreed together, that one should send a messenger to the other to apprise him of the day and hour on which the respective births occurred. By a singular chance, the messengers set out at the same time from the two houses, and met midway on the road, which proves that the two children were born at the same time. Well, behold the folly of the fortune-tellers. My father pretended to have read in the stars that I was to be a great genius, and all my life through a favourite of fortune. His friend who had been observing the heavens at the same moment, and who consequently should have seen what he did, assured him that he saw quite the contrary—an evident proof that there is nothing more ridiculous and more absurd than observations of this kind.'[2]

The other example quoted is also worthy of attention, as illustrating the foolishness of this practice. 'When the Greek emperor Comnenus was very ill, the Patriarch Theodosius earnestly exhorted him not to lose time in settling

[1] On the first Commandment.
[2] D. Genevansi, 'Histoires Choisies,' p. 436. Apud Müller *in loco.*

the affairs of his kingdom, and making arrangements about his youngest son, Alexius. The emperor answered that he had been assured he could live fourteen years more, and that his informant was one whose word could not be questioned, as he was an astrologer. As his malady appeared not to abate, but rather increased from day to day, he gave up all hope of living much longer, settled his affairs as well as he could, detested and bewailed his superstition, and died a short time after.'

4. What we say of the unlawfulness and absurdity of *judiciary astrology* applies to all other kinds of divination, by whatever name they may be designated. Amongst others we may mention the following superstitious means of predicting future contingent things: (1) Augury from the chattering of birds. (2) Auspice, or sign, or token of success from the flight of birds. (3) Aurispicium, from the entrails of animals, especially the liver. (4) Palmistry from the lines on the hand. (5) The observance of times, such as, to-day it is an auspicious time to set out, to-morrow to make merchandise; those observing times and appointing seasons. (6) Necromancy, or consulting the dead. (7) Omens. (8) Observing dreams and believing in them. (9) Consulting oracles. (10) Cutting cards. (11) Consulting false prophets and fortune-tellers.[1]

Under the names of sorcerers, wizards, witches, classes of persons are mentioned in the Pentateuch, who, from the import of their names, may be presumed to have dealt in divinations; but their profession only, not the particular methods of carrying it on, is intimated.

5. Divination has been practised in all ages, and in all nations, alike civilized and savage. Numerous forms of divination are mentioned in the Old Testament, such as divination by rods,[2] divination by cups,[3] consultation of

[1] See St. Alphon., N. 5 and 6. [2] Jos. iv. 12. [3] Gen. xliv. 5.

idols,[1] divination by fire,[2] divination by dreams.[3] Moses forbade every species of divination, because a prying into the future clouds filled the mind with superstition, and because it would have been an incentive to idolatry; indeed, the frequent denunciations of the sin in the prophets tend to prove that these forbidden arts presented peculiar temptations to apostate Israel. But God supplied His people with substitutes for divination, which would have rendered it superfluous, and left them in no doubt as to His will in circumstances of danger, had they continued faithful. It was only when they were unfaithful that the revelation was withdrawn.

Superstition not infrequently goes hand-in-hand with scepticism, and hence, amid the general infidelity prevalent through the Roman Empire at our Lord's coming, imposture was rampant, as a glance at the pages of Tacitus will suffice to prove. Hence the lucrative trade of such men as Simon Magus,[4] Bar-jesu,[5] the slave with the spirit of Python;[6] the vagabond Jews, exorcists,[7] and others,[8] as well as the notorious dealers in magical books,[9] at Ephesus.

An example of the anti-divining spirit of the better portion of the Jewish people is given by Josephus, in the case of a man who put to shame the pretensions of a soothsayer by shooting with his arrow the bird on which the soothsayer was beginning to announce his auguries respecting the good or ill fortune of the journey which the Jew and his party were pursuing. How, said the sagacious Jew, could that poor wretched creature pretend to foreshow us our fortune that knew nothing of its own? If it could have foretold good or evil to come, it would not have come to this place,

[1] Zach. x. 2; Ez. xxi. 21. [2] Ez. xxi. 21.
[3] Deut. xiii. 2, 3; Judges vii. 13; Jer. xxiii. 32.
[4] Acts viii. 9. [5] *Ibid.* xiii. 6. [6] *Ibid.* xvi. 16.
[7] St. Luke xi. 19; Acts xix. 13. [8] 2 Tim. iii. 13; Apoc. xix. 20.
[9] Acts xix. 19. See Smith's 'Bible Dictionary.'

but would have been afraid lest Mosallam the Jew would shoot at it and kill it.

All the above-mentioned various kinds of divination only differ materially (*materialiter*), and are not distinct species of sin; and the particular kind of divination need not, therefore, be specified in confession; but the direct invocation of the devil has to be explicitly confessed. This regularly involves some other species of sin, such as idolatry, heresy, or apostasy from the faith. We have now various questions to ask and to answer, in connection with this species of crime.

6. What kind of sin is divination?

(1) Express divination is always and of its own nature a mortal sin, and does not admit of light matter. It is a formal contempt of God, and familiar treating with God's greatest enemy. This may be proved from various places of the Holy Scriptures: *Neither let there be found among you any one that shall expiate his son or daughter, making him to pass through the fire; or that consulteth soothsayers, or observeth dreams or omens, neither let there be any wizard, nor charmer, nor anyone that consulteth pythonic spirits, or fortune-tellers, or that seeketh the truth from the dead. For the Lord abhorreth all these things, and for these abominations He will destroy them at thy coming.*[1] And it was announced by God: *The soul that shall go aside after magicians and soothsayers, and shall commit fornication with them, I will set My face against that soul, and destroy it out of the midst of its people.*[2] One can scarcely plead ignorance in extenuation of the guilt of this express divination, as everyone must be fully aware of the malice of such a crime.

(2) *Tacit divination* is also of its own nature a mortal sin. It is useless to say, by way of excuse, that in these divinations we have no intention of holding communication with the

[1] Deut. xviii. 10 *et seq.* [2] Lev. xx. 6.

devil, as that would be like putting our hand into the fire and not intending it to be burnt. The reason of the unlawfulness and the guilt of all divination is not difficult to understand. 'In its very nature it implies distrust in the providence of God, and a desire to obtain knowledge unsuited to one's circumstances in life. Knowledge which might partly enable some to get undue advantages over others, and partly divert the movements of Providence out of their proper channels—such knowledge is wisely withheld; it cannot be obtained by legitimate means; and, as a necessary consequence, the attempt to impart it must always proceed on false grounds; it is a pretension based on hypocrisy and deceit. Diviners, therefore, is but another word for deceivers, and dupes of fraud and imposture must be all who listen to their divinations. Hence the art so readily allied itself to idolatry. Rejected by the true religion, it became a fitting accompaniment and handmaid of the false, and has always shown the same tendency to hang on the progress of a corrupt Christianity that it did to associate itself with the corruptions of Judaism.'[1]

(3) Are they guilty of divination who conjecture a future tempest from the cries or flights of birds, or the aspects of the heavens or the stars? By no means, because there is a natural connection between, and a natural cause for, these things. Neither are those guilty of sin who conjecture the dispositions or states of mind of another from external signs or appearances, of the face, eyes, hands, etc., although people, lest they should be guilty of another sin, namely rash judgment, should abstain from such practices.

(4) Do they sin grievously who consult fortune-tellers? Generally speaking, they do not, because faith or firmness of faith in the predictions of the fortune-teller is wanting. Besides, the gipsy strollers, or other quack professionals of

[1] 'Imp. Bible Dictionary'—'Divination.'

this description, do not believe in their own powers as to preternatural gifts. They are sometimes clever: they take up this occupation in order to get money. Those who consult them mean nothing more than to satisfy their curiosity, or they do so for fun or amusement, and have no real faith in the fortune teller. But if such persons do really believe in the practice, and advert to and consent to the communication with the devil, either directly or indirectly, they are fully guilty of the sin of divination. And if the fortune-tellers themselves believe in their own powers as supernatural, and accordingly act seriously in the matter, they, too, are fully guilty of divination, and it is difficult to excuse those who consult them from the guilt of co-operating in their sin.

One thing we should remember in this and in all other matters of the kind, that we should be careful against playing or joking with the devil. He is too clever for us, and will ultimately cheat us out of something more than our money.

(5) The question is asked whether it is lawful to use lots —casting lots by dice or otherwise. Casting lots may be taken in different senses. To cast lots, what are called in Latin *divisoriæ*, by which it is to be decided in disputes and in distributing things what should be given to each of the contending parties, is certainly lawful when all the parties concerned in the matter agree to adopt this means. Casting *lots* that are called *consultoriæ*, that is, to find out what is the will of God in a certain matter, is not lawful, unless it be by Divine impulse, or in some grave question when there is no other sufficient means of deciding it. This was the case in the election of St. Matthias by the Apostles, with St. Peter at their head. The reason why this is not always lawful is because, according to the ordinary providence of God, it is not the appointed means of finding

out His will ; and its folly may be illustrated by the example of the young man who tossed up a penny to decide his religious vocation. In order to discover the will of God, we should ask the advice of prudent men, and of ecclesiastical superiors and confessors in all cases of serious doubt. Finally, casting lots that are called *divinatoriæ*—*e.g.*, throwing the dice in order to find out some hidden thing or the knowledge of some future contingent event—is unlawful and a species of divination, and therefore contains, at least, a tacit invocation of the devil. This is the species of divination that is properly called *sortilegium* in theology, although the name is applied to other kinds as well.

(6) Is it lawful to conjecture future things from dreams? It is not lawful to judge from them future free and contingent things, or things that depend on the free will of men. As to what is told us in Sacred Scripture, that dreams sometimes come from God—*e.g.*, the dreams of Joseph and Samuel—we must understand that such dreams are certainly to be believed ; but when God sends them, they will be accompanied by such evident signs that they may be easily distinguished from either natural or diabolical dreams.

CHAPTER VII.

ON WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT: MESMERISM, SPIRITUALISM, HYPNOTISM.

1. Animal magnetism: its origin, author, and general principles.
2. Mesmerism the same doctrine as animal magnetism: its effects.
3. The six stages or degrees of mesmerism.
4. The three grades of mesmerism theologically considered—(1) Magnetic sleep. (2) Somnambulism. (3) Clairvoyance.
5. In what way is the use of magnetism unlawful, and to what extent has it been condemned by the Holy See?
6. Table-turning, when unlawful.
7. Spiritualism: its origin and history.
8. It does not appear to be a new system of error.
9. The familiar spirits of the Old Testament.
10. In what sense it is unlawful, and why.
11. Extracts from American publications as warnings against spiritualism.
12. Errors in connection with spiritualism—(1) Eternity of matter. (2) Necessity of creation. (3) Denial of eternal penalties. (4) A kind of *metempsychosis*.
13. Hypnotism: its meaning and its various phenomena described.
14. Two classes of objections usually urged against hypnotism, stated and answered by Dr. Cruise, of Dublin. (1) Those of a physical nature. (2) Those based on moral grounds.
15. Three rules which include the precautions needful on the part of a hypnotizer to save him from sin and error.

We have to examine in connection with divination some of the practices of our age that gradually obtain a great hold on the minds of the people, such as animal magnetism; or *mesmerism*; *table-turning*; spiritualism, or *spiritism*; and *hypnotism*; and of these we must speak separately.

1. *Animal Magnetism.*—The name is taken from a subtle fluid that is said to come forth from the bodies of animals, or even from all bodies, like to the magnetic fluid. Its discoverer was Mesmer, a German physician, who made it known in the year 1774, and who contended that by means of this fluid he could cure various maladies. Hence from this author it received the name of *mesmerism.*

The following principles of this system were promulgated by Mesmer's celebrated disciple Deston:

(1) Animal magnetism is a universal fluid, constituting our absolute plenum in nature, and the medium of all mutual influence between the celestial bodies, and betwixt the earth and animal bodies.

(2) It is the most subtle fluid in nature, capable of a flux and reflux, and of receiving, propagating, and continuing all kinds of motion.

(3) The animal body is subjected to the influences of this fluid by means of the nerves, which are immediately affected by it.

(4) The human body has poles and other properties analogous to the magnet.

(5) The action and virtue of animal magnetism may be communicated from one body to another, whether animate or inanimate.

(6) It operates at a great distance without the intervention of any body.

(7) It is increased and reflected by mirrors; communicated, propagated, and increased by sound; and may be accumulated, concentrated, and transported.

(8) Notwithstanding the universality of this fluid, all animal bodies are not equally affected by it; on the other hand, there are some, though but few in number, the presence of which destroys all the effects of animal magnetism.

(9) By means of this fluid nervous disorders are cured

immediately, and others mediately; and its virtue, in short, extends to the universal cure and preservation of mankind.

'Considered scientifically, the commissioners of the Royal Academy of Science, with Dr. Benjamin Franklin at their head, entirely disapproved of the whole system. The academicians came to the conclusion concerning it that it was not entirely useless, even to philosophy; and it is one *fact* more to be consigned to the history of the errors and illusions of the human mind, and a signal instance of the power of imagination.'[1]

2. I subjoin the following brief outline of mesmerism from the 'Imperial Dictionary' (Ogilvie's):

'*Mesmerism* is the doctrine of animal magnetism, so named from its author, Frederic Anthony Mesmer, a German physician. In 1778 Mesmer propounded a theory, according to which all phenomena of life are referred to the motion and agency of a certain universal magnetic fluid, which admits of being influenced by external agents, and especially by magnetic instruments. Wonderful effects were said to have been produced by him, and others who co-operated with him, upon animal bodies, and many cures performed by the agency of a certain magnetical apparatus. The use of magnetic instruments is now quite exploded, and the principal means used to promote the effects of mesmerism are such as touching, and stroking with the hands, according to rule; breathing on a person, fixing the eye upon him, etc. The mesmerized person must always be of a weaker constitution than the mesmerizer, and, if possible, of a different sex, and must also believe devoutly in the science. The effects produced upon the person to whom mesmerism is communicated, or the mesmeree, as he is called, consist partly in bodily sensations, as chilliness, heaviness, flying pains, etc.; partly in a diminished activity of the external

[1] 'Encyclopædia Britannica.'

senses; partly in fainting, convulsions, sleep with lively dreams, in which the mesmeree is transported to higher regions, observes the internal organization of his own body, prophesies, gives medical prescriptions, receives inspired views of heaven and hell, purgatory, etc.; reads sealed letters laid on his stomach, and when awakened is totally unconscious of what he has experienced.'

3. Six stages or degrees of mesmerism have been enumerated, viz., *the walking stage*, *the stage of half-sleep*, *mesmeric sleep* or *stupor*, *somnambulism*, *self-contemplation* or *clairvoyance*, *universal illumination*, in which the patient knows what is going on in distant regions, and all that has happened, or will happen, to those persons with whom he is brought into mesmeric relation, and so forth. More latterly, mesmerism has been associated with phrenology, so that by touching certain organs, the patient when mesmerized is made to dance, sing, fight, steal, etc. The science as a whole is utterly unworthy of belief; but there are some facts connected with it, such as the artificial sleep and somnambulism, which are worthy of attention.

4. Theological writers reduce the effects or grades of mesmerism to three principal ones. The first is the stage of magnetic sleep. This is brought about after a short time, in such a manner that the sleep becomes sound and tranquil, the senses entirely lost, so that the person cannot be awakened by any noise, nor even by the application of a red-hot iron, and the limbs become stiff and cold. The person may, however, be brought to his senses by the command of the magnetizer. The second grade is that of somnambulism, in which the person still under the magnetic influence, in which the faculties are insensible, hears, sees, speaks and answers all the questions put to him. The third is a state of magnetic ecstasy, in which many wonderful things are said to happen; for example, the magnetized

person has a wonderful and clear vision of the remedies for dispelling diseases, a vision of the doings and the actions of other people, even though they be a long way off. This state is that of *clairvoyance.*

5. It would appear that the second and third grade of this practice are unlawful, as the effects do not seem to have any natural connection with the causes that are applied to produce them; and there is good reason to suspect that they are brought about through the agency of the devil, when as a matter of fact they do take place.

As to the use of magnetism to produce the first effect, it does not appear that it is unlawful, because sleep of the kind may be brought on by some physical and natural cause.

The Holy See has often been interrogated as to the use of magnetism, and has from time to time given various decisions. By a decree of the S. Congregation of the *Pœnitentiaria,* April 21, 1841, the use of magnetism, as then represented to the S. Congregation, was declared unlawful, that is, when its experiments were used for ends not material and not honest, and when unworthy means were applied; furthermore, the S. Congregation thought that certain books wickedly propagating the errors of magnetism should be forbidden. Besides dealing with particular cases which had been brought before it, the S. Congregation, by a decree of July 28, 1847, gave a general rule for our guidance in these matters to the following effect. All error being removed, and in the absence of every kind of divination, as well as of every invocation of the devil, either explicit or implicit, the use of magnetism, namely, the mere act of using lawful physical means for a desired effect, is not morally wrong, provided the end in view be not illicit or depraved.[1] But the application of a principle or means purely physical,

[1] Lehmkuhl, vol. i., p. 361, note.

for the purpose of finding out or producing supernatural knowledge or effects, and explaining them away in a physical manner, is nothing more than a deception, and a species of deception, both unlawful and heretical.

The last and principal Encyclical which the Sacred Congregation of the Inquisition has issued on this subject was directed to all Bishops, on July 30, 1856, and entitled : *Adversus magnetismi abusus* (Against the abuse of magnetism). In the above teaching is repeated, and from it we may draw the following conclusions : (1) The use of magnetism is only allowed when it is employed in an honest manner, as a mere physical means, for a natural and lawful end, all invocation of the devil being rejected. (2) The use of magnetism should always be discouraged, as it is full of danger, and has been so often allied to superstition and licentiousness ; and these dangers are greater when its use is employed between persons of a different sex.

6. *Table-turning.*—From the year 1832, first in America and afterwards in Europe, the phenomenon of table-turning has been everywhere observed. Tables and other movable things, when touched at their extremities by the fingers of those present all joined together, begin to move and go round, etc. If interrogated whilst in this state, the turning table gives answers by knocking, once, twice, and so forth, or by writing with a pen fastened to one of the feet of the table. Answers are given about things that are secret and entirely unknown, and even as to the state of departed souls.

It is disputed as to whether simple table-turning is unlawful. There is, as I have said, a twofold effect of table-turning—one, the simple moving or going round of the table ; the other, its giving back replies to questions. With regard to the first, it is accounted for by some as a natural effect produced by an electric fluid through the fingers of the parties experimenting ; and if there be no divination or

command of the will, the simple turning of a table would not in their opinion be unlawful. Others deny this explanation as to the electric fluid, and attribute the whole result to the devil, or some preternatural cause, and regard it therefore as unlawful. With regard to the tables answering questions or giving replies, either by knocking or by writing, by means of a pen attached to them, there is no doubt that such a practice is unlawful, and must be attributed to divination of some kind. It is unlawful, as well as foolish, to ask questions of tables and inanimate things, for the purpose of learning secret things; and all who assist at or co-operate with such a practice act unlawfully, even though they protest at the time they do not wish to invoke the devil or have anything to do with him or his agents.

7. *Spiritualism.*—This system arose out of mesmerism. In its modern form it began in America about the year 1848, and found its way into Europe in 1852. Answers by this system were received through persons, instead of things, as mediums through whom the spirits were interrogated. An authentic and accurate account of this system is given us in the 'New Encyclopædia,' from which I extract the following:

'*Spiritualism* is a system of professed intercourse with the spirits of the departed. The believers in this system are called spiritualists, and maintain that in the first place there is no *a priori* reason to show why spirits should not manifest themselves; and secondly, that there is an abundance of specific evidence, such as would be admitted in other important cases in a court of law to be decisive, proving that they actually do make manifestations. The modern form of spiritualism, which originated in America in 1848, has much in common with the doctrine of Mesmer, and other German spiritualists of the last century, as well as those which Reichenbach based on his experiments in magnetism

and electricity, and his "odic force." The doctrine of clairvoyance, so closely associated with mesmerism, may be regarded as having led the way to modern spiritualism. The celebrated phenomenon of "spirit-rapping" was first manifested, it is said, to a family of the name of Fox, of Hydeville, New York. Mysterious raps were heard about the house, and soon a system of communication was established with the invisible rapper, who answered various questions put, and announced the presence of a spirit. The neighbours were soon invited to put questions through the medium of one of the members of the family. These alleged manifestations first became notorious throughout a wider circle by the professed discovery of a long-concealed murder through the rapping of the spirit of the murdered man. After this the excitement and curiosity of the neighbourhood became extreme, and the Fox family were made the subject of endless questions and investigations, the Fox girls having appeared in public, and the so-called spirit phenomena being subjected to various tests. Spirit-rapping, table-turning, and the other phenomena of spiritualism, soon became much more general, and already in 1852 there were in Philadelphia alone 300 spiritualistic circles, there being about 30,000 mediums, or persons whose organization fitted them for communicating with the spirit-world, in the United States. More remarkable phenomena than any hitherto manifested were produced through the mediumship of D. D. Home, a native of Scotland, who in 1850, at the age of seventeen, became publicly known in America as a medium. One of the phenomena said to be now exhibited was that of "levitation," the medium being raised from the ground by spiritual agency. In 1855 he went to Europe and gave séances before Napoleon III. and Alexander II. of Russia. Besides spirit-rapping and table-turning, the most remarkable of the spirit manifestations are spirit draw-

ing and writing, spirit photography, and lifting and moving of heavy bodies by spiritual means, the floating of persons in the air, and spiritual musical performances. In some cases the writing and drawing are done by the hands of mediums; in other cases they are professedly done by direct spiritual agency, without the intervention of human instrumentality. The introducer of spiritualism into England was Mrs. Hayden, who came from America to England in 1852; and for some time all the mediums that appeared in England were Americans, or people who had settled there. She was followed, in 1855, by the celebrated Home, in 1859 by Squire, and afterwards by others. Spiritualism has now spread over the whole civilized world, and numbers its believers by millions, its headquarters being still in the United States.'

8. From the description of spiritualism, it does not appear as a new system of error. Substantially we find something very like it in the old species of divination, and in all theories of ghost stories and fairies—only that the modern names sound more scientific and mysterious. Instead of *fairy* and *banshee* and *ghost* and *hobgoblin*, we have *séances*, *mediums*, etc.

9. In the Old Testament we are informed of one specific mode of trying to elicit the secrets of Providence—having or consulting with familiar spirits—*Oboth*, as such persons are called.[1] But this seems to be an elliptical expression for those who had an *ob;* and the characters in question are more fully described in Leviticus[2] as those who, *whether man or woman*, had *ob* in them—that is, a spirit of python, or divination. The witch of Endor belonged to this class. She is called a mistress of *ob*, and Saul asked her to divine to him by *ob*—in the English Bible, *by the familiar spirit.* It seems to have been but another mode of designating a

[1] Lev. xix. 31. [2] *Ibid.* xx. 27.

necromancer—one who professed to have familiar converse with the souls of the dead, and to derive thence information not accessible to others respecting the designs of Providence and the issues of life. The responses that were given to the questions which such necromancers undertook to answer were pronounced as from the bloodless and ghastly frame of an apparition, and hence were usually uttered in a shrill, squeaking voice. This is alluded to by Isaias, when, speaking of Jerusalem in her coming state of prostration and ruin, he represents her *speech as like the voice of an ob out of the earth*[1]—the voice of one more dead than alive, peeping or chirping. The necromantic art naturally grew (and the same may be said of spiritualism) in the hands of designing and fraudulent men, out of the superstitious notions prevalent among the heathen respecting the spirits, or manes, of the departed. These were supposed to enter on a semi-deified state after death, and in that state to keep up an occasional connection with certain persons and places on earth. It was only what might be expected, that crafty persons would work upon this superstitious belief, and turn it to purposes of fraud and imposture.[2]

10. In this very old state of things we find much of the theory of modern spiritualism; and we know that this system is not unknown to Catholic mystical theology, which gives us directions and rules for detecting demoniacal visions and apparitions. We do not deny, therefore, that such things as are attributed to the agency of spirits may and do exist; but the practice of invoking the spirits, or communicating with them by unfit and unlawful means, is a grave sin against the first commandment and the honour and worship due to God. It is therefore unlawful to consult spirits through persons that are called *mediums*, or according to the systems of modern or ancient spiritualism: and it is

[1] Isa. xxix. 4. [2] See 'Imp. Bible Dictionary'—'Divination.'

unlawful to co-operate with or assist at such consultations. The reason is that assigned by the Fathers of the Synod of Baltimore, because the consultation of spirits to know hidden or secret things, especially appertaining to the future life, or the state of the departed, is certainly divination, and such knowledge, when obtained, must necessarily be ascribed to Satanic intervention, since it does not admit of any other explanation.

11. I may here subjoin one or two extracts from American publications on this subject, as quoted by Fr. Müller in his instructions on the first commandment. Mr. J. F. Whitney, editor of the *New York Pathfinder*, was formerly a warm advocate of spiritualism, and published much in its favour. Hear what he says: 'Now, after long and constant watchfulness, after seeing for months and years the progress and practical workings of spiritualism upon the devotees and its mediums, we are compelled to speak our honest conviction, that the manifestations coming through the acknowledged mediums, whether rapping, tipping, writing, or entranced mediums, have a baneful influence upon its followers, and create discord and confusion. The generality of their teachings inculcates false ideas, and upholds principles and theories which, when carried out, debase men and make them little better than brutes.'

The same author says: 'The claims of spiritualism are very high, but there is abundant proof to show that, instead of being ancient Christianity revived, it is, perhaps, the worst enemy that Christianity ever had to meet. It is Satan's last grand effort to substitute his own infernal worship for the worship of God. The snares of the devil are cunningly laid. Thousands and millions are already his deluded victims; occasionally we hear a warning voice from one who has escaped from his power like a mariner from the sinking wreck, but the greater part of Satan's deluded

followers, after they have been once initiated into the spiritualist "circle," are like boatmen in the midst of a terrible whirlpool—their destruction seems inevitable.'

12. With spiritualism we may connect those called spiritists, namely, those who seek from the invisible world of spirits, by invoking them and observing attentively their manifestations, to know their nature, their faculties or powers, and their destination. These teach (1) the eternity of matter; (2) the necessity of creation; (3) they deny the eternity of punishments in the future life; (4) they leave to each one after death the power of meriting or demeriting; (5) they assert a kind of *metempsychosis*, or various incarnations and reincarnations of souls. Moreover, this reincarnation may be taken in the sense of those who say that the souls of men inform successively different bodies here on earth, or in the sense of those who say that after death they assume other bodies, in which they dwell in the stars, or in one of the planets, or in the sense of those who say that the souls of men after death remain around us in space, united to subtle or aromatic bodies, as Fourier teaches, and are given up to a life of voluptuous pleasure. Every one can understand that these theories, or rather figments of *spiritism*, are entirely gratuitous, and, what is much worse, contrary to the Catholic doctrine as to the destiny and end of man after this life.[1]

13. *Hypnotism.*—Many of the things that were formerly attributed to magnetism more recently obtained a new name, and are called *hypnotism*. Whether the two systems are really different is not quite certain.

Sleep (ὑπνός) is produced by a fixed and continuous gaze at a mirror, or any resplendent object, or at the person hypnotizing, or at a person by whom one has been before hypnotized.

[1] See Consalez, 'Phil. Elem.,' vol. ii., p. 315.

The hypnotized person does everything at the will and bidding of the hypnotizer. With regard to the phenomena of hypnotism, some affect the body—as insensibility, paralysis, lethargy, and catalepsy, which are produced in the person hypnotized by the hypnotizer. Other phenomena regard or affect the imagination, as hallucination, oral suggestions, and the like. Others, again, are mental suggestions, clear intuitions and visions of hidden and secret things, etc.

The state of hypnotism ceases at the will of the hypnotizer, as, for example, by blowing or breathing on the person hypnotized. After the state ceases, the hypnotized does not remember any of his acts while in that state, and he feels tired and weary.

If to the person hypnotized a suggestion were made that he should do something afterwards, when the time comes the state of hypnotism will return, and the person will do the thing suggested.

As to the phenomena of hypnotism, those indicated in the first and second place, although not easily explained, do not seem to exceed the natural order or powers of nature. If this natural hypnotism be induced for a just cause, in an honest, becoming manner for a natural end, as for the purpose of medical cure, it is not unlawful. But every one can see that hypnotism is exposed to many dangers to virtue and morals, as the person hypnotized seems to be entirely in the power of the hypnotizer. The phenomena assigned in the third place seem to surpass the natural order and the powers of nature; and as we cannot attribute them in those cases to the supernatural power of God or the Saints, it only remains that they be accounted for by diabolical agency, and are therefore unlawful. I think it worth while, in treating of this subject, to quote some passages from a pamphlet written by Dr. Cruise, a good Catholic physician

of Dublin, and published in the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science*, in 1891, in which he answers objections against and gives some sound advice as regards hypnotism.

14. According to this trustworthy author, objections may be classified into (1) those of a physical nature, and (2) those based on moral grounds.

(1) As regards the former, we have the evidence of experts of large experience, such as Liebault, Bernheim, Luys and Voisin, and they assure us that such objections are groundless.

If accidents have arisen, it was only in the hands of unskilled, non-medical operators. So far as I am aware, no case has been recorded of injury to a patient's health, where hypnotism was used by a skilled physician.

Besides baseless objections on the score of injury to the health of the subject, many absurd difficulties are raised by the thoughtless. We are told by some that hypnotism is not new. I grant it, and would remind those wiseacres of the words of Ecclesiastes: *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be, and that which is done that which shall be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.* Nevertheless, there is a new departure in modern hypnotism—the hypnotism of Liebault, namely, the combination of *suggestion with induced sleep.*

Again, we are told that hypnotism is incomprehensible. This might need reply, if anything else in natural science was comprehensible, but we know it is not. The ringing of an electrical bell can easily be demonstrated up to the point when we are asked why a current of electricity passing round a piece of iron converts it for the time into a magnet. Of that we know no more than we do why the earth goes round the sun—so of hypnotism.

It is further objected that hypnotism is useful only in affections of the nervous system. My reply is simple. In the first place, the charge is *untrue;* and secondly, *if it were*

true, it would bear strongly in favour of hypnotism, because these very ailments are avowedly the most rebellious to ordinary medical treatment.

(2) Passing on to the objections which may be urged against hypnotism upon the score of morality, I feel that I tread upon very delicate ground. There is no doubt that it is a very serious matter to entrust our free will to the domination of another, and, as it were, to confide ourselves into his hands. Nevertheless, we freely consent, without hesitation, to do this every day, when we take anæsthetics—such as nitrous oxide gas, chloroform, methylene, or ether. The reason we do not shrink is because we always make sure to entrust ourselves to those in whom we have full confidence: why should not the same precaution justify us in submitting ourselves, or our patients, to hypnotism?

Even granting—which I do—that the surrender of will and action in hypnosis is greater than in the case of ordinary anæsthetics, the decision must be similar, and is summed up in one advice: 'Take care whom you allow to hypnotize you.'

15. Bernheim lays down three rules, which seem to include all needful precaution on the part of the hypnotizer. Let me quote them:

(1) 'Never hypnotize any subject without his formal consent, or the consent of those in authority over him.

(2) 'Never induce sleep except in the presence of a third person, in authority, who can guarantee the good faith of the hypnotizer on the subject. Thus, any trouble may be avoided in the event of an accusation, or any suspicion of an attempt which is not for the relief of the subject.

(3) 'Never give to the hypnotized subject, without his consent, any other suggestions than those necessary for his cure. The physician has no rights except those conferred upon him by the patient. He should limit himself to the

therapeutic suggestion; any other experiment is forbidden him without the formal consent of the patient, even if it be in the interest of science. The physician should not profit by his authority over the patient in order to obtain this consent, if he thinks that the experiment which he wishes to perform may have the slightest harmful effect.'

'Satisfied, as I now am, that hypnotism is a reality, a great means towards cure, one which can never be crushed by ignorant and baseless criticism, I believe that it is our duty—imperative duty—to do it justice and rescue it from the hands of charlatans. *As we use it, it will be good or evil.*'

The same author answers the objection which is sometimes used against hypnotism, to the effect that the hypnotized subject falls permanently under the dominion of the hypnotizer, and may be made to act criminally under his suggestion. This idea, he tells us, has been hugely exaggerated. If such things ever arise, the suggestions must have been criminal—the very event which we should carefully obviate in every possible way. And he adds: 'Granting that criminal suggestions have been made (and we know where the wrong lies), there is ample evidence to show that conscience, even dormant, as it is in hypnosis, is not extinguished, and the evil suggestions will be resisted and rejected if the conscience of the hypnotical subject is opposed to them.' He gives two instances in point, which I need not quote, as his conclusion is quite clear, namely, that if criminal suggestions are ever made in hypnotism, *which they should not be*, it remains for the dormant conscience of the subject, whatever it may be, to accept or reject them.

The author concludes his lecture with the following words: 'After a somewhat full and careful study of hypnotism, such as may be accomplished by reading, I felt in

doubt and bewilderment, tinctured by a strong element of scepticism. In this frame of mind I went to the centre where it is practised on a large scale, and saw for myself what it is, what it can do, and where it fails. In my humble way, although sorely pressed by other absorbing avocations, I have tried it on a small scale, and with very encouraging results. I have told you the conclusions to which I have been irresistibly drawn. Let those who would condemn hypnotism, without trial, do as I have done, and then record their verdict.'

CHAPTER VIII.

ON WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT: VAIN OBSERVANCE, MAGIC OR SORCERY, WITCHCRAFT.

1. Vain observance: its meaning and division.
2. Three kinds of vain observance.
3. Vain observance is a mortal sin of its own nature.
4. How vain observance may be known.
5. Rules to be followed in cases of doubt.
6. List of some superstitious practices.
7. Magic: its meaning and division.
8. Witchcraft: its meaning and its practices.
9. Magicians referred to in Sacred Scripture.
10. Conclusion of the instruction on superstition in the words of M. Collin de Paucy, as quoted by Martinet.

1. *Vain observance* is a species of superstition by which one endeavours to do something through diabolical agency, or with the help of the devil.

It differs from divination, inasmuch as this is primarily ordained to obtain speculative knowledge concerning some occult thing, and *vain observance* is used to obtain practical knowledge in order to do or omit something.

Like divination, *vain observance* may be either by the *express* or *tacit* invocation of the devil. The *express* would be when a man would be so wicked as directly to invoke the aid of the devil in order to cause injury to another, whether that be done with or without any contract. The *tacit* invocation is that which is included in the use of charms, spells,

or other disproportionate means for obtaining some effect—that is, the use of means which neither of themselves, nor by nature, nor by the law of God, are ordained for such a purpose.

2. There are three kinds of *vain observance*. The first, called in Latin *ars notaria*, is that by which one, in order to obtain knowledge without time or study, or any ordinary means, would make use of means disproportionate to that end, as, for example, using unknown or meaningless words, certain prayers, a certain potion, etc. The second, called *observantia sanitatum*, the art of curing, is that by which a man, for the cure of diseases, or as a protection against lightning, shipwreck, and the like, employs vain means, such as charms, spells, etc. These charms, or spells, usually consist of some words of occult power—any form of words, whether written or spoken, supposed to be endowed with magical virtues. The third is the observance of events, as, for example, when a man, by the observance of certain events not at all connected with or pertaining to the effects produced, conjectures that good or evil is to happen to himself or another, and therefore on that account does or omits something—*e.g.*, upsetting the salt on the table; stumbling at the doorstep when leaving home, thirteeen sitting down to table, etc.

3. Like divination, *vain observance* is of its own nature a mortal sin, because it gives Divine honour to a creature by expecting to receive from it something which God alone can give, and because there is contained in it a compact with or an invocation of the devil. It is however, very often only a venial sin, by reason of the imperfection of the act, it not being always fully deliberate or its malice adverted to, or by reason of simplicity, ignorance or timidity, which is often found amongst uninstructed and uneducated people who practise this species of superstition.

4. Vain observance may be known (1) by the cause, which is not destined to produce such an effect, either naturally or according to any manifestation of the will of God, as, for example, to invoke some unknown names, to make a certain number of crosses, or to perform a charm, in order to obtain the cure of a malady; (2) by the adjunct of some vain or false circumstance regarded as necessarily required for obtaining a certain result, as, for example, that, for the cure of a disease, the herbs to be used should be collected on a certain day, at a given time, or by a certain person; (3) by attributing infallible efficacy to the means used, which are certainly fallible, as, for example, those who carry about their persons certain devotional objects, or recite certain prayers, or say those prayers a certain number of times, or make a certain number of crosses, and attribute to these exercises an infallibility that the Church has not authorized

5. As to cases of doubt in discerning whether a thing is superstitious or not, we may give the following rules: (1) If there be a probable reason for thinking that a thing of its own nature is calculated to produce naturally the desired effect, it may be lawfully used, but with a protest against diabolical intervention. (2) If, however, it is clear that the thing is evidently above nature, and it is doubtful whether the effect would be from God or from the devil, then it is to be regarded as superstitious and unlawful—unless the sanctity of the person performing the act, or other clear signs, point to the contrary; for it is rash to think that miracles always and easily happen. We must, however, remember that it is in no sense superstitious to observe the moon, or times, or seasons for the gathering of herbs, harvest, and fruit, etc., nor to carry about with us holy things, such as Agnus Deis, the words of the Sacred Scripture as *Gospels* in honour of God, or of the Saints, and by way of imploring their aid. Neither is it in any sense

superstitious to recite a certain number of prayers, nor to do all Catholic acts of piety that are calculated to increase devotion, provided we do not attribute an infallible power to any of them.

6. The Rev. Fr. Müller gives the following list of superstitious practices, which is by no means complete, but suffices to call our attention to their nature and their absurdity: 'It is superstitious to believe that I shall have ill luck if I stumble on the threshold as I go out of the house, or if I put on my right shoe first, or if I meet a man with one eye' (or a woman with red hair) 'or one that is sick and blind. It is superstitious to believe that some misfortune will befall me if I should meet a magpie on the road, or if a crow should croak from the house-top. It is also superstitious not (purposely) to begin a journey nor to commence any business upon days that are considered unlucky, and particularly the day of the week on which the feast of Holy Innocents falls that year; not to get married on Friday, nor in May or August, such times being supposed to be unlucky. Now, what power have these things to forebode good or bad luck? Surely none. They have no power of themselves, nor from nature, nor much less any power from God.'[1]

7. *Magic.*—This word is derived from the Greek μαγεια, or from μαγος, a wise man or philosopher. It is sometimes called sorcery, and it means, in its superstitious sense, to try with the help of the devil to do wonderful things. Magic may be taken in its natural or artificial sense, which may be called the *white art*—that is, the art of doing wonderful things by natural means and human ingenuity, without any diabolical or preternatural help; and this is not evil—*e.g.*, the entertainments of Maskelyne and Cooke, Egyptian Hall, London. But the magic which is wrong and sinful is

[1] Müller on the First Commandment.

the art of doing wonderful things above all human power, by the help of the devil, either tacitly or expressly invoked. The following various meanings are given to magic : (1) The art or science of putting into action the power of spirits ; or the science of producing wonderful effects by the aid of superhuman beings, or of departed spirits, sorcery, enchantment. (2) The secret operations of natural causes—*natural magic*, or the application of natural causes to passive subjects, by which surprising effects are produced. Natural magic is founded on natural philosophy, and it arose from the disposition of the scientific of former times to take advantage of the vulgar propensity to attribute everything beyond their comprehension to supernatural causes. (3) *Celestial magic* attributes to spirits a kind of dominion over the planets, and to the planets an influence over men. (4) *Superstitious* or *geotic magic* consists in the invocation of devils or demons, and supposes some tacit or express agreement between them and human beings.

8. *Witchcraft.*—This is an art by which an effort is made to injure others in their persons or property through the help of the devil. That is to bewitch them—to make them fall into disease or into poverty ; to hurt their cattle—take away the butter from the milk ; to excite others to impure love, or to inspire them with hatred towards certain persons, and the like. To do any of these things is a great abomination in the sight of God, and a grevious sin, not only against religion, but also against charity and justice.

Witchcraft—includes the practices of witches ; sorcery ; enchantments ; intercourse with the devil ; a supernatural power, which persons were formerly supposed to obtain possession of by entering into a compact with the devil. Indeed, it was fully believed that they gave themselves up to him, body and soul, while he engaged that they should want for nothing, and be able to assume whatever shape they pleased,

to visit and torment their enemies and accomplish their infernal purposes. As soon as the bargain was concluded, the devil was said to deliver to the witch an *imp*, or *familiar spirit*, to be ready at call and to do whatever it was directed. By the aid of this imp and the devil together, the witch, who was almost always an old woman, was enabled to transport herself through the air on a broomstick or a spit, and to transform herself into various shapes, particularly those of cats or hares; to inflict diseases on whomsoever she pleased, and to punish her enemies in a variety of ways. The belief in witchcraft is very ancient. It was generally believed in in Europe till the sixteenth century, and even maintained its ground with tolerable firmness till the middle of the seventeenth century. Vast numbers of reputed witches were condemned to be burned every year, so that in England alone it is computed that no fewer than 30,000 of them suffered at the stake.[1]

9. Magicians are frequently referred to in sacred Scripture: (1) Moses speaks of them in Egypt. *Pharao called the wise men and the magicians; and they also by Egyptian enchantments and certain secrets did in like manner.*[2] (2) The magicians and soothsayers that Saul rooted out of the land.[3] (3) Manasses followed divinations, gave himself up to magic arts, had with him magicians and enchanters.[4] (4) *Simon Magus, who had been a magician . . . seducing the people of Samaria, giving out that he was some great one.*[5] (5) The magicians of Egypt were able to work remarkable wonders. They imitated two of the plagues, namely, turning water into blood and producing frogs. The third plague they could not imitate, and they acknowledged the finger of God in that wonder.[6]

[1] Ogilvie's 'Imp. Dictionary.'
[2] Exod. vii. 11.
[3] 1 Kings xxviii. 9.
[4] 2 Paral. xxxiii. 6.
[5] Acts viii. 9.
[6] Exod. viii. 18, 19.

They also imitated the first sign given them by Moses by turning their rods into serpents, but *the rod of Aaron devoured their rods*.[1]

10. We may conclude our instructions on superstition in the words of M. Collin de Paucy, as quoted by Martinet :[2] 'It perhaps has not been sufficiently remarked, in the midst of self-interested clamour of the philosophers, that the only men who are totally free from superstition are the faithful children of the Church, because they alone possess true light.

'On the contrary, all men who are in a state of doubt appear to realize the celebrated sentence that those who are separated from God go astray ; for the most unbelieving of their number is also the most superstitious. They reject all revealed dogmas, and with Johnson they believe in ghosts (Johnson was a devout believer) ; with Rousseau, are afraid of the number thirteen ; with Bayle, think Fridays unlucky ; with Volney, interpret dreams ; with Helvetius, consult fortune-tellers ; with Hobbes, study the future by arithmetical combinations ; and with Voltaire, dread omens. One wise man spent his time in discovering the elixir of life ; a celebrated mathematician believed that the elements were inhabited by cabalistic substances, while another philosopher could not tell whether he believed in God, and performed conjuring ceremonies to raise the devil.' The Abbé Martinet thus concludes : 'Men can never succeed in blinding themselves to such an extent as to believe that they are the greatest beings. If they are not taught by the true religion to acknowledge and to adore God, the Father Almighty, they will seek to have intercourse with spirits, genii, and hidden powers ; and if necessary they will sacrifice to them even human victims. All the philosophy of Julian the Apostate was not sufficient to deter him from such horrible excesses. . . . As

[1] Exod. vii. 12. [2] 'Faith and Reason.'

for the lower orders, when once they are so stupefied as to believe neither in the God of heaven nor in the devil in hell, they fall into the power of far worse devils—devils in human form. . . . I repeat, the only remedy against faith in any demons whatsoever, against the abominable hopes and homicidal works of egotism, is *religion*, which by Christian faith and hope teaches us to love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves.'[1]

[1] 'The First Commandment,' p. 269.

CHAPTER IX.

ON WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT: IRRELIGION.

1 Irreligion: its meaning and its different species.
2. Tempting God—express and implicit. That from which it proceeds.
3. The nature and gravity of the sin illustrated by three consequences which follow from our teaching on this point.
4. Sacrilege: its meaning and division.
5. Difficult ways in which sacrilege may be committed.
6. Whether any theft committed in a church is a sacrilege.
7. Sacrilege according to the civil law.
8. Observations and directions with regard to sacred vestments and sacred vessels.
9. Simony: its nature or meaning, in canon and in civil law.
10. Three questions to explain—(1) What is meant by a spiritual thing in connection with simony? (2) What is meant by a temporal thing or its equivalent? (3) In what does the contract of buying and selling consist?
11. The division of simony into mental, conventional, real or confidential, and the meaning of these.
12. Simony against the Divine and natural law, and against the ecclesiastical law, and contrary to the virtue of religion, proved from St. Thomas.
13. The nature of the sin, as to its gravity, when against the law of God, and when only against the ecclesiastical law.
14. Titles that exempt from simony.
15. The *honoraria*, stipends and offerings given to priests and ministers of the Church, explained.
16. Ecclesiastical penalties attached to the sin of simony and those guilty of it.

1. IRRELIGION is a vice that is opposed to the virtue of religion by defect, and which tends to show irreverence either directly to God, or indirectly by showing it to sacred per-

sons or things. It is threefold in its direct irreverence, namely, *tempting God*, *perjury*, and *blasphemy*. In its indirect sense we have *sacrilege* and *simony*.

Perjury and *blasphemy* may be more appropriately explained when treating of the second commandment. Here we have to explain the three kinds of irreligion: *tempting God*, *sacrilege*, and *simony*.

2. *Tempting God.*—This means to try a test, by some word or deed, whether God is powerful, wise, or merciful, or gifted with any other of His attributes. It is a rash expectation of some extraordinary effect from God, by way of experimenting on His Divine power. Thus, to ask God to fructify a field without sowing or cultivating it.

This tempting God may be divided into that which is *express* or *formal*, as when one either by word or deed means to test the Divine power or knowledge; and into *implicit* or *interpretative*, as when a person, though not intending to test any of the Divine powers, yet asks for or does something that serves to no purpose, but to prove the power of God, or His goodness or knowledge. This tempting God proceeds from a twofold vice—either from *infidelity*, as when a person doubts as to one of the Divine perfections, and says or does something in order to test that perfection, or in order to obtain from God some manifestation of that perfection; or from *presumption*, as when a person, who doubts nothing of the Divine perfections, seeks to obtain from God, without any necessity, some manifestation of His will or His help by prodigies or miracles; thus, (1) a sick person who expects by prayer to recover health, and neglects all the natural means of recovery, is tempting God. (2) A man who freely exposes himself to the proximate occasion of mortal sin, in the hope that God may, by an extraordinary grace, preserve him from falling, is also guilty of tempting God. (3) A man who exposes his life to danger

without cause, expecting God to intervene on his behalf, is likewise guilty of this sin.

We have now to ask what is the nature of this sin?

The tempting of God which proceeds from infidelity is of its own nature a mortal sin, inasmuch as it is against faith and religion. *Tempting God* through presumption or curiosity, as in one or other of the three ways above described, though of its own nature it would be a mortal sin, because it would be against the virtue of religion, may, however, be, and frequently is, only a venial sin, because of light matter or want of serious advertence to the act or its malice. From this teaching it follows:

(1) That a man would sin grievously against religion who would seek to prove his innocence by a duel, or by the application of a red-hot iron or the like; or who would go of his own accord to martyrdom, unless it be done in good faith or through Divine inspiration. It is, however, lawful to ask God for a miracle under the condition, *if it be pleasing to His Divine will*, as often as there is a grave cause, for our own health or for that of another, or for the carrying out of the Divine will in some good work. This is not to tempt God, but wisely and opportunely to seek His aid.[1]

(2) It follows that a man would sin grievously who, without a just and sufficient cause, would expose himself to the danger of death, in the hope of being saved from it by the Divine aid. If he were rashly to expose himself to the danger of death, without confiding in Providence for protection, the sin would be against the fifth commandment and would not in this case be a sin against religion.

3. It follows that a man would sin venially who in a slight illness would refuse to take remedies, and expect to be miraculously cured by God. This is not a very grave

[1] St. Thomas, 2, 97; art. 2.

deordination, and it would be no sin at all if a person should hope to recover naturally by the help of God.[1]

4. *Sacrilege.*—Sacrilege is the profanation of a holy thing. Holy things are of three kinds, namely, sacred persons, sacred places, and sacred things of any kind, such as the sacred vessels of the altar, the relics and images of the Saints. Sacrilege is therefore threefold—*personal*, *local*, and *real*. That is called holy which is destined by Divine or ecclesiastical usage to the Divine service, and consecrated or blessed in order to be used in the worship of God.

Persons are holy or sacred in this sense when they are dedicated to the service of God by vow or by sacred orders.

Holy or *sacred places* are those set apart by the authority of the Church as places of Divine worship, such as churches, consecrated cemeteries, public (not private) chapels.

Sacred or Holy Things.—These are things that appertain to the Divine service or worship, such as the Sacraments, sacred vessels and vestments, relics of the Saints, the ornaments of the Church and the altar, etc., and also ecclesiastical property and goods.

Personal, *local*, and *real* sacrilege differ in kind, and the sins must therefore be specified in confession, as to whether they are sins of personal, local, or real sacrilege.

The sin of sacrilege is of its own nature mortal, because it is against the virtue of religion ; it admits, however, of light matter, and on this account the sin may sometimes be only venial, because it is not directly and immediately against God.

5. The different kinds of sacrilege may be committed in many different ways.

Personal sacrilege may be committed (1) by violently and in anger striking a cleric or a religious ; (2) by a sin against the sixth commandment committed by or with a person

[1] St. Alphonsus, No. 30.

consecrated to God by a vow of chastity or by sacred orders; (3) by subjecting ecclesiastics to a secular tribunal (in countries where what is called the *privilegium fori* is admitted), and in all places when it is question of spiritual matters or ecclesiastical jurisdiction. (4) It would not be a sacrilege to detract or calumniate a priest or a religious, because it is their persons that are regarded as sacred, not their fame or name.

Local sacrilege may be committed (1) by all sins through which, according to ecclesiastical law, a church would be desecrated—such as wounding a person so as to shed blood copiously in the church; (2) by all sins which are contrary to ecclesiastical immunity, and the sanctity of a church or sanctuary, such as spoliation, robbery, fighting, and the like; (3) by all actions unbecoming the sanctity of such places, such as buying and selling, noisy assemblies, etc., unless it be necessary for some grave cause or necessity to use a church for such purposes.

Real sacrilege may be committed (1) by the unworthy administration or reception of the Sacraments; (2) by irreverently treating sacred relics or images; (3) by the profanation of the sacred vessels and ornaments of the Church; (4) by stealing anything that is dedicated to the service of God or to the Church; (5) by the abuse of the sacred Scriptures or Spiritual expressions, as, for example, distorting the text or words of Scripture, or applying them in some vain or profane sense; (6) by neglecting the care of the sacred vessels and things, so as to allow them to be abused or destroyed, in the case of one who has charge of such things, and is bound to take care of them.

6. It may be asked whether every theft committed in a church is a sin of sacrilege. It may be stated generally that every theft of a sacred thing, or of a non-sacred thing from a sacred place, is a sacrilege according to the rules laid down in

canon law: *Sacrilegium committitur anferendo Sacrum de Sacro, vel non sacrum de sacro, sive sacrum de non sacro;* sacrilege is committed by stealing a sacred thing from a sacred place, or a non-sacred thing from a sacred place, or a sacred thing from a non-sacred place.

As to things not belonging to the place, but which are left by chance and found in churches, such as umbrellas, books, purses, and such-like articles, it is doubtful whether the stealing of these things would be sacrilegious. St. Alphonsus says probably not.[1]

7. According to the civil law, church robbery, or the felonious taking of any goods out of any parish church, or any other church or chapel, is sacrilege, and by common law was formerly a capital offence, but it is now put, by statute, on a footing with other felonies.

'Breaking and entering any church, chapel, or other place of Divine worship, and stealing therein any chattel, or having stolen any chattel in any church or chapel, breaking out of the same, subjects to penal servitude for life, or not less than three years, or imprisonment not above two years, with or without hard labour or solitude. Breaking or entering sacred places with intent to commit a felony is penal servitude for seven or three years, or imprisonment for two years.'[2]

8. As to the sacred vestments and vessels, there are a few observations to be made and alluded to. (1) The sacred vestments or vessels should not be converted to profane uses, unless they are first entirely changed as to their form. Thus, a chalice should not be used as an ordinary drinking-cup; but if melted down or reduced to a sheet of silver, it may be applied to any use whatever, like other metals. It is not right to mend or patch profane garments with an old chasuble, for example, or to apply to profane uses the

[1] No 39. [2] 'Cabinet Lawyer.'

sacerdotal vestments or other sacred ornaments. This does not apply to things that are not blessed—the candlesticks, cruets, altar-cards, etc.

It is lawful for clerics, religious, lay sacristans, and nuns who are sacristans, to touch the sacred vessels; others would sin, but only venially, and the sin would be sacrilegious, by touching the sacred vessels without some reasonable cause. When the sacred vessels contain the Blessed Sacrament, it is not lawful for anyone to touch them but a priest or deacon, and it would be a grave sin of sacrilege to do so, except in case of necessity, as when the Blessed Sacrament would be in danger of profanation.

It is lawful for all, indiscriminately, to touch other sacred things, such as, for example, the relics of the Saints, the sacred ornaments, except such things as touch immediately the Sacred Host, unless these be first purified. Corporals and purificators, after they have been used, should be washed three times, or at least once, and that the first time, by a cleric in Holy Orders. It is probable that the first washing may be by a simple tonsured cleric, especially if there be some just reason for his doing so. The first washing cannot be by a lay person, nor even by a nun, without venial sin. The second and third washing may be given by any person, lay or cleric.[1]

From these observations with regard to the sacred vessels and vestments, we may be reminded to guard against any irreverence or sacrilege towards the Blessed Sacrament, whether it be enclosed in the tabernacle, or exposed for benediction, or carried in procession, as on the Feast of Corpus Christi, or when received in the Holy Communion.[2]

9. *Simony* (so called from Simon Magus, who offered money in order to purchase the power of communicating

[1] See 'Compendium of Moral Theology,' by Fr. Sabetti, S.J.
[2] *Ibid.*

the gifts of the Holy Ghost).[1]—It is the sin of buying or selling spiritual things or things annexed to the spiritual, for temporal things or their equivalent. It is understood in the civil law as the crime of buying or selling ecclesiastical preferment, or the corrupt presentation of anyone to an ecclesiastical benefice for money or reward. In England, by statute 31 Elizabeth, c. vi., severe penalties are enacted against this crime. In the Church of Scotland, simoniacal practices afford a ground for deposing a clergyman who has been guilty of them, or for depriving a probationer of his license.

10. To understand fully the nature of this crime, we have three questions to examine: (1) What is meant by a spiritual thing in connection with simony? (2) What is meant by a temporal thing or its equivalent? (3) In what does the contract of buying and selling consist?

(1) What, in this case, is meant by a spiritual thing? By this is understood anything supernatural, ordained to salvation, either formally, such as grace or the gifts of the Holy Ghost, or the cause of these gifts, as the Sacraments, prayers, sacramentals, etc., or the effects or use of this supernatural power, such as consecration, absolution, dispensation, blessing, conferring of benefices, and other acts of jurisdiction.

By things annexed to spiritual, we must understand those things which, though not in themselves spiritual, are nevertheless in one or other of the following ways connected with something spiritual: either (1) *antecedently*, when it precedes the spiritual, as patronage with regard to benefices, sacred vessels and vestments with regard to the sacraments; (2) *concurrently*, as the intrinsic labour necessary and inseparably connected with a spiritual work or action, such, for example, as to stand at the altar whilst saying Mass, or

[1] Acts viii.

the time required for the celebration of Mass; (3) *consequently*, or that which follows the spiritual action, but presupposes it, as the income of a benefice.

The extrinsic labour which is not necessarily connected with the sacred function is not regarded as spiritual or annexed to spiritual, *e.g.*, a long journey, a long fast and delay, and, some say, *singing* Mass.

The sustenance of the person who ministers to our spiritual wants must not be regarded as spiritual, and it is not, therefore, simony to give and receive money, not as wages, but as a stipend for support, even for work intrinsically connected with the spiritual.

The offices or duties of cleaning the church, taking care of it, carrying and burying the dead, are not spiritual.

To instruct others in sacred doctrine is spiritual, if the instruction tends only to the spiritual good of others; hence it would be simony to receive wages for instructing converts or teaching catechism, and it would not be lawful to receive payment for the study and labour required for this purpose, as these are intrinsically connected with the work itself. The same may be said of the time and labour expended in preparing a sermon. But it is otherwise when the instruction tends to the temporal advantage or good of another, or to the utility, honour, delight, and pleasure of others, such as to teach Sacred Scripture, theology, canon law, etc. St. Thomas clearly says that he who teaches a science can receive a just stipend in return for his labours.[1]

(2) *Temporal Things.*—By a temporal thing, in the matter of simony, is to be understood anything that is given or promised for a spiritual thing. Canon law distinguishes or divides temporal things into three sorts, designated by technical Latin words: (1) *Munus a manu*—by this is meant money or its equivalent, either in movable or im-

[1] 2, 2, of 190; art. 13 ad 8.

movable goods. (2) *Mumus a lingua* — which means favour, patronage, commendation by pact or agreement. It means to do a favour to another in order to obtain from him a benefice, or some spiritual office for a friend. (3) *Mumus ab obsequio*—that is, to teach or serve in temporal things in order to obtain spiritual things. It means any work done for the utility and accommodation of another, *e.g.*, to give a loan, to serve and perform some duty for him *gratis*, or for a less amount of wages, in order to obtain a benefice. From these it will appear how strict the laws of the Church are with regard to simony and all connected with it.

(3) *Buying and Selling.*—In the matter of simony by buying and selling we have to understand any onerous contract, by which one intends to oblige another to receive a spiritual thing as the price of a temporal thing, or a temporal thing as the price of a spiritual thing. An express compact is not required, but it suffices to have the intention, either implicit or tacit, of obliging or inducing a man to grant a spiritual thing for a temporal gift or reward or payment.

11. *The Division of Simony.*—Simony may be either *mental*, *conventional*, *real*, or *confidential*.

Mental simony is committed when one confers a spiritual benefit on another with the intention of obtaining on that account some temporal advantage ; or if one offer a temporal thing in the hope of receiving some spiritual gift, but without any agreement, either express or understood. This kind of simony is a sin, but does not come under the ecclesiastical penalties in the external *forum* of the Church, according to the principle that in her external legislation and discipline *de internis non judicat Ecclesia*—the Church does not judge of the interior.

Conventional Simony —This is an external compact or

agreement, either *express* or *tacit*, of giving or receiving something spiritual for a temporal, or *vice-versâ*. It is purely *conventional*, if the contract be not executed by either party; if executed by one of the parties, then it is called *mixed* simony. The penalties of the ecclesiastical law are not to be applied to this kind of simony, because, *odiosa sunt restringenda*, according to a received principle of canon law.

Real simony is when on both sides the agreement is perfect and executed, that is, when the spiritual duty is done by one, and the temporal price paid by the other, or *vice-versâ;* or, at least, when a portion of the payment happens to be made.

Confidential.—This kind of simony only relates to benefices. It would take place when a man would resign his benefice to another under the express or tacit condition that this other, as it were out of an obligation or debt, should cede the same benefice back again either to himself or to another, say to the brother or nephew of this man who granted the benefice, within a certain time.

This dealing with benefices shows how corrupt practices are prevented by the Church's legislation. Benefices cannot be resigned under any of the conditions that are known as *access*, *ingress*, or *regress*, or with the confidence or understanding of receiving the fruits of the benefice. If the understanding be to receive some temporal emolument other than the fruits of the benefice, it would indeed be simony, but not confidential simony.

The confidence of *access* with regard to a benefice would be when one, wishing to grant a benefice to another, who at the time is incapable of it on account of age or some other cause, grants the benefice to a third party, with an agreement that this man should resign it as soon as the other would be old enough and capable of receiving it.

Simony would be committed by *ingress* in the case when a man would resign a benefice conferred, but not yet possessed, under an agreement of obtaining the benefice again, or taking possession of it under other circumstances, or, in future, when it may happen to be again vacant.

Simony by *regress* would be when a man would renounce a benefice already possessed in favour of another, and at the same time enter into an agreement of repossessing it again in case this other should at any time resign it.

12. Lastly, simony may be either against the Divine and the natural law, or against the human and ecclesiastical law. Simony against the Divine and natural law is that which is prohibited by the Divine law, such as to sell the Sacraments, benefices, dispensations from vows, etc. That against the ecclesiastical law is that which is prohibited by the law of the Church as having a semblance of simony, as involving the danger of simony, as, for example, the exchanging of one benefice for another, both being equal; or exchanging a spiritual thing for a spiritual thing; to give or receive anything on the occasion of a *concursus*, or examination for a pastoral charge,[1] to receive anything for conferring Orders.[2]

The sin of simony is contrary to the virtue of religion, and comes under irreligion. St. Thomas explains its nature and its reason. He says that an act is bad of itself from the fact of its falling upon undue or wrong matter. But the buying and selling of a spiritual thing affects, indeed, undue matter, and an object that cannot lawfully be subjected to such a transaction, for a threefold reason: (1) A spiritual thing can never be compensated by any temporal thing. (2) That cannot be the object of sale of which the vendor is not the proprietor; and no prelate of the Church is the proprietor of spiritual things, but only the dispenser. (3) The selling

[1] Trid. Sess., XXIV., c. 18, [2] *Ibid.*, Sess. XXI., c. de Reformatione.

of spiritual things is contrary to their origin, inasmuch as they are granted gratuitously by the Divine bounty; therefore anyone buying or selling a spiritual thing shows irreverence towards God and Divine things, and on that account falls into a sin of irreligion.

13. Simony that is against the Divine law is a mortal sin of its own entire nature, that is, always a mortal sin, and does not admit of light matter; for the reason that to compare or value any spiritual thing, no matter how small, with a temporal thing is to do a great injury to the spiritual thing, inasmuch as the Holy Spirit is thereby, at least implicitly, disparaged or sold.

The simony which is against the human or ecclesiastical law is a mortal sin of its own nature, but admits of light matter, because, according to St. Alphonsus,[1] when a temporal thing is not received as the price of a spiritual thing, and when the receiving of such a thing is forbidden only in order to avoid the appearance of simony, then there is no real simony, and no injury is done to the spiritual thing. The sin in such a case is only a violation of the law of the Church, which admits of light matter.

In further explanation of this question, it is necessary again to notice those things that are annexed to the spiritual either *antecedently* or *concurrently*, or *consequent* on something spiritual. If a thing is *antecedently* annexed to the spiritual, and may be estimated by itself, independently of its spiritual connection—as, for example, the sacred vessels—it would not be simony to buy or sell them according to the value of the material objects, without putting on any extra charge for their blessing, or under the spiritual consideration. Nevertheless, the Sacred Congregation of Indulgence has forbidden entirely the selling of various objects after they are blessed, such as rosaries, medals, crucifixes, etc., and in

[1] No. 50.

case of their being sold, the indulgence attached to them is thereby lost.[1]

If things have no value whatever in themselves, except their spiritual value, then they could not be sold without the sin of simony, such, for example, as patronage or presentation to a benefice.

Those things that are *concurrently* connected with spiritual things, or follow from them necessarily and intrinsically (*consequenter*) cannot be sold for a temporal price without simony. Thus, for example, the right to the temporal fruits attached to ecclesiastical benefices, or the right to maintenance annexed to the religious state, cannot be sold or bought without simony. The reason is because that right to the *temporal* cannot be acquired without the spiritual title, and in such a case the spiritual title itself would have to be bought.

14. *Titles which exempt from Simony.*—There are five titles that exempt from simony in the relations of the spiritual and temporal in this matter: (1) The *liberality* of the giver or the benefactor, as when a temporal thing is freely and gratuitously offered in return for some spiritual work or favour. (2) The *maintenance of life* or *sustenance*, according to their state, to which the ministers of the Church have a right. In the sacred function, a sacred minister would be probably guilty of a venial sin by intending primarily the stipend for his maintenance, although this could not be called the sin of simony. (3) *Extrinsic labour*, such as to go a long distance to preach or to say Mass. (4) The removal of an unjust vexation or impediment, as in the case of a certain benefice being conferred in Holland on a priest, the heretics prevent him from receiving the benefice unless he pays, say, £100. It is lawful in such a case to pay the money, not as the price

[1] S. C. Ind., Feb. 22, 1847, and May 15, 1886.

of the spiritual benefice, but to free himself from the unjust vexation. Those receiving the money are guilty of simony, because they had not any just title for exacting it. (5) The disposition or regulation of superiors; thus, sometimes a pension is allowed to be given or received out of a benefice; in the absolution from censures, or in the dispensation from an impediment or a vow, some pious pecuniary work may be imposed on the party dispensed; and other like disposition of things in this matter may be made by the Sovereign Pontiff, by reason of the supreme administration of ecclesiastical goods which he possesses.

We may return to the title of maintenance in order more distinctly to explain what concerns the giving of offerings and stipends amongst Catholics. It would in no sense be simoniacal to give or receive temporal gifts whenever there is a lawful extrinsic reason or title for doing so—provided always the temporal is not given for the spiritual, or the spiritual for the temporal. St. Thomas says that to receive or give something for the maintenance of the ministers of the Church, according to the order of the Church and approved custom, is lawful; and St. Alphonsus tells us that this may be done even though the ministers may be otherwise rich, and in no need of external support. This title is declared lawful by Christ's own teaching: *The workman is worthy of his hire.*[1] And St. Paul teaches it in many places: *Know ye not that they who work in the holy places eat the things that are of the holy place? and they that serve the altar partake with the altar? So also the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel.*[2]

15. On this title, ministers receive the fruits of their benefices, the pastor receives his *dues* for marriages and funerals, and the priests receive *honoraria* or stipends for Masses.

[1] St. Matt. x. 10. [2] 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.

On this point I may quote the following observations of the Rev. Fr. Müller: 'It is a custom amongst Catholics to give an *honorary* on the occasion of a christening or a marriage or a funeral. It is also customary to give an honorary whenever a priest is requested to say Mass for a particular intention, whether for the living or the dead. . . . The custom of giving an offering to the priest, with the request to offer up Mass, is one of the most ancient in the Church. . . . The early Christians were accustomed to bring offerings during the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and one part of the Mass is on this account still called the *offertory*. The fourth Council of Lateran says that, though the Sacraments are given freely, nevertheless the faithful should be exhorted to give the customary offerings.' Now, what is given to the priest on the reception of the Sacraments or on the celebration of Mass is not given as *pay* for the graces received in the Sacraments, but as a compensation for his trouble, loss of time, and as a means of support. St. Paul says that he that ministers *at the altar should live by the altar*, and again, *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your temporal things?*[1] The priest cannot support himself by working at a trade or by entering into business. The Church forbids it, and the faithful would be scandalized. He must devote all his time —his whole life—to spiritual things, to the care of souls.

Let the priests that rule well, writes St. Paul to Timothy, *be esteemed worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine.*[2] In explanation of these words, St. Augustine says that 'they are worthy of double recompense —of the temporal support of the people, and of eternal glory from God—as a reward for the exercise of their holy ministry.'[3]

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 10, 11. [2] 1 Tim. v. 17.
[3] Müller, 'The First Commandment.'

16. The *Ecclesiastical Penalties to which those guilty of Simony are liable.* They incur excommunication, reserved to the Roman Pontiff, who (1) are guilty of real simony in connection with any benefice, and also their accomplices incur a like penalty. (2) All those guilty of *confidential* simony in respect to any benefice, and of whatever dignity they may be. (3) Those guilty of real simony in obtaining entrance into religion. (4) All those who quest or seek to obtain money for indulgences or other spiritual favours. (5) Those who collect alms for Masses where the stipends are of greater amount, and make profit out of the transaction by having the Masses said for a lesser stipend elsewhere. Also the conferring of a benefice obtained through simony is invalid, and both parties to the transaction are perpetually or for ever incapacitated for ecclesiastical offices or benefices. It is not certain that this incapacity can take effect before the sentence of the ecclesiastical judge is obtained. Every simoniacal election is null and void, even though the money be paid by others unknown to the elected; but this is not the case when money is given contrary to his prohibition. With regard to entering religion, the question is asked whether it is simoniacal to exact a dower or fortune or payment of money for admission into the religious state.

This would be simoniacal if such a thing were required as the price of entering religion or of profession, but otherwise:

(1) It is certainly lawful to exact payment for the keeping and support of novices in every religious institute, except in the Order of the Minor Observant Franciscans, as the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars declared on March 30, 1838. The same applies to the Capuchins.

(2) It is also certain that a fortune or dower may be required in all convents of nuns, according to the concession

of Clement VIII., and a decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council, September 15, 1683.

(3) As to monasteries of men, it is certain that they also may exact payment for the support of their members on the entrance or admission of such members, except as above in the case of Franciscans.

There is a final question to be answered with regard to simony—that is, the question of restitution. Whether and to whom what is simoniacally taken is to be restored? In answer to this, we have to consider whether it is a *spiritual* thing received, or a *temporal* thing. If *spiritual*, then nothing but a benefice is to be restored, because other spiritual things either cannot be restored, such as the Sacraments, prayers; or are not to be restored until after the sentence of a judge, as stated in the canons concerning sacred relics.

The fruits of a benefice acquired by simony should be restored to the Church; or according to a probable opinion, they may be given to the poor, or to the successor in the benefice, or disposed of according to the direction of the Sovereign Pontiff.

If *temporal*—that is, money or the like received as payment for spiritual favours—then, in case justice is not violated by the sin of simony, no restitution has to be made, unless some just penalty of the kind be inflicted by the sentence of a judge. There may also be some positive law obliging to restitution or some reparation in this matter, but I do not know of any.

As a general rule, one who obtains money, etc., by simony may make restitution either to the giver, or to the Church, or to the poor.[1]

[1] St. Alph. apud Craison, No. 6,494.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

1. The second commandment contained in the first, and a distinct commandment.
2. The Name of the Lord as revealed in the old and in the new law.

'Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.'

1. This is one of the four commandments in which a reason is contained why it should be kept, namely: *For the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the Name of the Lord, his God, in vain*[1]—that is, to take it without necessity, uselessly, disrespectfully. The Catechism of the Council of Trent says that this precept is contained in the former, which commands us to worship God in piety and holiness. He who is to be honoured must also be spoken of with reverence, and must forbid the contrary, according to the words of the prophet Malachi: *The son honoureth the father, and the servant his master; if, then, I be a Father, where is My honour?*[2] Yet, on account of the importance of the obligation which it imposes, God would make this law a distinct precept, and this He does in the clearest and simplest terms.

It is not, therefore, a superfluous commandment because implicitly contained in the first. Man's inclination to forget his duty is so strong that a special act of the Divine authority was exercised to make him understand the excellence, the

[1] Exod. xx. 7 [2] Mal. i. 6.

dignity and the grandeur of that Name before which *every knee shall bow, of those that are in heaven, or on earth, and under the earth.*[1]

2. The Name of the Lord, as the Psalmist tells us, is holy and terrible.[2] It is worthy of the greatest homage and respect. It is that name which the ancient Hebrews dared not pronounce. God did not make His Name known to the ancient patriarchs, as appears from the words *Et nomen meum Adonai non indicavi eis*, and hence they had to use a circumlocution in speaking of the Deity. To Moses this Name was revealed, and directions were given that the high-priest alone would have the right to pronounce it, and only once a year, and then accompanied with solemn ceremonies and surrounded by great pomp.

This shows us the will of God as to the glory and the majesty of His Name. In the New Law God manifested more clearly, not only His Name, but also His other Divine prerogatives. His condescension to us is no reason why we should the less honour and revere His holy Name; on the contrary, we should on this account be moved to greater love and thanksgiving. We can now pronounce the Name of God, and we ought to do so frequently to render homage to our Lord. We should pronounce that Name with sentiments like those of the Angels and Saints, who, prostrate before the throne of God, say without ceasing, with religious awe, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts.* We should pronounce it with the same sentiments as th Psalmist, who in numerous places in the Psalms employs all forms of language to praise and bless that holy Name: *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us extol His Name together. . . .*[3] *I will give glory to the Lord according to His justice: and will sing to the Name of the Lord, the most high. . . .*[4] *I will praise the Name of God with a canticle,*

[1] Phil. ii. 10. [2] Ps. cx. 9. [3] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 4. [4] *Ibid.* vii. 18.

and I will magnify Him with praise. . . .[1] We should pronounce it with love and confidence, and with a lively faith, especially in all our sorrows and afflictions, because our chief resource is to be found in that holy Name. *Our help is in the Name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*[2]

Dr. Hay tells us, in his work entitled 'The Pious Christian,' that the end or design of this commandment is to direct us how to worship God in our words by honouring His holy Name.

This commandment, like the first, contains a *positive* and a *negative* precept, and we may therefore treat of it in the same order, first as to what it commands, and secondly as to what it forbids.

[1] Ps. lxviii. 31. [2] *Ibid.* cxxiii. 8.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER I.

WHAT IS COMMANDED BY THE SECOND COMMANDMENT?

1. The text of the second commandment.
2. Four ways of honouring the holy Name of God: (1) Praising and blessing God. (2) Making and keeping lawful vows—(*a*) The nature of a vow, and its conditions. (*b*) The division of vows. (*c*) The obligation of a vow.
3. What sin is it to delay the fulfilment of a vow?

1. The texts of the Catechisms used in England and Ireland may here be given, as containing a summary of the explanation which follows:

English Catechism.

Q. What are we commanded by the second commandment?

A. By the second commandment we are commanded to speak with reverence of God and all holy persons and things, and to keep our lawful oaths and vows.

Maynooth Catechism.

Q. What is commanded by the second commandment?

A. We are commanded by the second commandment to speak with reverence of God, and of His Saints, and ministers of religion, its practices and ceremonies, and of all things relating to Divine service.

Q. What else is commanded by the second commandment.

A. We are also commanded by the second commandment to keep our lawful oaths and vows.

2. According to Bishop Hay, there are four ways of honouring Almighty God and His holy Name by our words,

and these form four different classes of duties into which the second commandment is divided:

(1) Praising and blessing God.

(2) Making and keeping lawful vows.

(3) Lawful oaths—that is, swearing by His holy Name in judgment, in justice, and in truth, when necessity requires it.

(4) Calling upon His holy Name to bless ourselves and others.

These are the duties enjoined by this commandment, and the vices opposite to each of these are the things forbidden by it.

(1) *Praising and blessing God.*—It is our duty to praise and bless the holy Name of God. God is called by many names, such as 'the Lord,' 'the Almighty,' 'the Lord of Hosts,' 'the King of kings,' 'the Strong,' and by other names of similar import which we meet in Scripture, all of which are entitled to the same veneration.

Under the name of God we may include all His titles and His attributes. Some of his titles are absolute, and these are: *Jehovah*, *God*, *I Am*, and these are names altogether incomprehensible and stupendous; others are relative, that is, respecting us and His other creatures, as, for example, *Creator*, *Lord and King*, *Father*, *Redeemer*.

His attributes are also His Names, such as His incommunicable attributes, His eternity, immensity, immutability, simplicity, which are proper to the Divine nature; or His communicable attributes, as mercy, goodness, holiness, and truth, etc., some rays of which may be found in His creatures. We must therefore take this commandment to refer to, and include, any Name of His by which God is pleased to reveal Himself to us; whether it pertains to His titles or His attributes, it must not be taken in vain.

Under this head of praising and blessing the Name of God, we may include the following teaching of the Catechism of the Council of Trent. According to this authority, the Name of God may be honoured: 1. When we openly and confidently confess Him to be our Lord and God; and not only acknowledge, but proclaim Christ to be the Author of our salvation. This is done formally and more solemnly by those who, either privately or publicly, make a profession of faith according to the formulas and creeds prescribed by the Church. 2. The Name of God is honoured when we pay a religious attention to His Word, which announces to us His sovereign will; make it the subject of our daily meditation, and, by reading and hearing it, study according to our respective capacities and conditions of life to become acquainted with its saving truths. 3. Again, we honour and venerate the Name of God when, from a sense of religious duty, we celebrate His praises, and when under circumstances, whether prosperous or adverse, we return Him unbounded thanks, saying, in the language of the Psalmist: *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all that He hath done for thee.*[1] We may be encouraged in this by the example of holy Job, who, after all his sufferings, was able to exclaim: *Blessed be the Name of the Lord.*[2] 4. The Name of God is honoured when we confidently invoke His assistance, either to relieve us from our afflictions or to give us confidence and strength to endure them with fortitude. This is in accordance with His own wishes. *Call upon Me,* He says, *in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me.*[3] 5. Finally, we honour the name of God when we solemnly call upon Him to witness the truth of what we say. This manner of praising and honouring the Name of God will be more fully explained later on, when treating of oaths.

[1] Ps. cii. 2. [2] Job i. 21. [3] Ps. xlix. 15.

(2) *Making and keeping Lawful Vows.*—God is honoured by Vows ; and on this subject we have to examine : (*a*) the nature of a vow ; (*b*) the obligation of a vow ; and (*c*) the modes by which the obligation of a vow ceases.

(*a*) *The Nature of a Vow.*—A vow is a promise made to God, of a better good which is within the power of the person vowing. A vow, both in its making and in its observance, is an act of religion, or *latria*, because it is ordained to the worship and honour of God. Hence, a vow, properly so called, can be made only to God. If made to any of the Saints, without any intention whatever of binding one's self towards God, it would not be a vow, but merely a sacred promise—an act of *dulia*.

It is useful and expedient to make vows, inasmuch as by a vow a man (1) places himself under a holy necessity of doing good, fixes the inconstancy of his mind, and confirms his good resolutions, which are so often broken and changed, and which therefore prove insufficient to keep us steady in our duty ; (2) by vow a man shows a greater readiness to serve God, a greater devotion to Him, and proves that he is in earnest in his will to please Him ; (3) by vow the good to which a man binds himself becomes a more precious offering than if done without vowing ; for, by the vow, he not only gives to God the good action, but also in a sense his liberty : he gives both the tree and the fruit.

It may therefore be said, in general, that it is better to vow than not to vow. For, as I have said, to vow is an act of religion which is the highest amongst the moral virtues ; it is to subject one's self more to God, because, by reason of the vow, not only the action is offered, but even the power of doing otherwise, and by vow the will is immovably fixed on that which is good, and to act from a will thus determined or fixed to that which is good appertains to the perfection of virtue.

In further explanation of the nature of a vow, it may be useful for the faithful to understand exactly its essence and the conditions that should accompany it, in order that it be obligatory.

The essence of a vow consists in its being a promise made to God, and not merely a resolution. Some confound a resolution with a vow, and we may say in case of doubt that, as a rule, when a person intends to bind himself by a grave obligation he means a vow.

The promise made to God, like every valid promise, should be (1) serious; hence, a promise made without the will to bind one's self, or the intention of vowing, would not be a vow; a vow may be taken, however, by a man who has not the will to fulfil it. (2) The promise should be deliberate; hence, a vow is not obligatory which is not fully deliberate, and made with the direct will, such as is required for a good and meritorious act or any serious contract. (3) The promise should be spontaneous; hence, a vow made through fear is invalid—that is, if the fear be grave and caused for the purpose of extorting the vow. Then the vow is invalid, but according to the more probable opinion, not by the law of nature; if a solemn vow, it is invalid by the ecclesiastical law, and if simple by the more common interpretation of theologians, it is understood as not binding. This is to be understood when the cause of the fear is external and a free agent, as, for example, when a father would constrain a child to make a vow. But if the cause be internal, or some natural cause, as, for example, a dangerous malady or a sudden thunderstorm, which might make a man have recourse to God by vow in order to be saved from the danger—fear thus caused would not invalidate the vow, which is, in such cases, sufficiently voluntary. (4) The promise should be with the consent of the will, and that as to the substance of all that is promised;

hence, a vow made through error, deceit or ignorance is invalid if the error, deceit or ignorance should be about the substance of the vow; but if only it be about the accidents or lesser circumstances the vow would be valid. These conditions are required on the part of the person vowing; there are also conditions required that a thing may be the object or matter of a vow. These are: (1) That the work or thing promised be good or virtuous, as God cannot accept anything that is not good and virtuous. Hence, a vow cannot avail that is made to do something evil. It would be a mortal sin to vow to do something that is grievously sinful, and it is the more probable opinion that it would be a mortal sin to vow to do something only venially sinful. A vow cannot be made about an indifferent thing as such, but to vow to do a thing that in itself is indifferent or otherwise unfit matter of a vow, would be only a venial sin. (2) The work promised to God should be of a better good—that is, better than its opposite or its contradictory; it should be better either absolutely, that is, in itself, or better relatively, that is, in respect to the person vowing. (3) The work promised to God ought to be possible and within the power and capacity of the person vowing. Hence, a vow to do what is impossible is of no avail whatever. If the matter of a vow become impossible or unsuitable as to one part only, the obligation of the vow would remain as to the other part, if the matter be divisible; but there is no obligation if the matter be indivisible.

If the matter of a vow became impossible as to its accidents and accessory circumstances, the vow would oblige as to its substance, but not *vice-versâ*.

The vow of never sinning is valid as to its possible part, namely, of never sinning mortally, or of never sinning

venially with full deliberation, or of never sinning at all in some particular matter.

(*b*) *The Division of Vows.*—I shall only mention the principal kind of vows in my enumeration of them.

(1) Vows are divided into *simple* and *solemn*. Solemn vows are made in some religious Orders strictly so called, and are received as irrevocable by the Church, and as perpetually binding. All other vows are simple. The vow of chastity attached to sacred orders is said to be *solemnized*, because to this simple vow the Church has annexed one of the effects of a solemn vow, namely, that of annulling a future marriage.

(2) They are divided into *absolute* and *conditional*, to which latter the *penal* vow may be referred.

(3) Into *perpetual* and *temporal*.

(4) Into *personal*, as, for example, a vow of fasting or going on a pilgrimage; *real*, as a vow of offering a lamp or altar to a church; and *mixed*, when the vow combines both the real and personal.

There is one important question which may be considered in connection with the division of vows into simple and solemn, and that is, whether these two are specifically or essentially different, or only accidentally. It is now commonly held that a *simple* and a *solemn* vow are not essentially or intrinsically different, but only by reason of the constitution or enactment of the Church annexing to them different effects, and also by reason of the external and ceremonial solemnity.

This is proved from the very nature of any vow, which is essentially and intrinsically a promise made to God; and it may also be shown by the Constitutions of Boniface VIII. and Gregory IX., as given in ordinary manuals of canon law.[1]

[1] See also 'Convent Life,' part. ii., ch. i., on the vows in general.

(*c*) *The Obligation of a Vow.*—After considering the nature and division of vows, we have to treat of their obligation, and under this head we have the following questions to answer: (1) What, and how great, is the obligation of a vow? (2) *Whom* does a vow oblige? (3) *When* does it oblige?

To the first of these questions we have to answer: (1) The obligation of a vow arises from the virtue of religion alone. That obligation is clearly signified in the Sacred Scriptures. *Redde Altissimo vota tua*,[1] says the Psalmist, and God was yet more explicit and formal when He said: *When thou hast made a vow to the Lord thy God, thou shalt not delay to pay it, because the Lord thy God will require it. And if thou delay, it shall be imputed to thee for a sin.*[2] He adds: *If thou wilt not promise, thou shalt be without sin. But that which is once gone out of thy lips, thou shalt observe, and shalt do as thou hast promised to the Lord thy God, and hast spoken with thy own will and with thy own mouth.* (2) The obligation of a vow, like the obligation of a law, is, *ordinarily speaking*, grave in a grave matter, and light in a light matter. I have said *ordinarily speaking*, because the person making a vow may in a grave matter (a few cases excepted) only bind himself lightly, but no one can bind himself under a grave obligation in a light matter.

From this it follows that the violation of a vow is a sin against religion, mortal sin in a grave matter, and only venial in a light matter. Light matter may, however, become grave when several small things coalesce to make up a grave amount, as might happen in violations of the vow of poverty.

A doubtful vow does not oblige, or it obliges according to the rule as to whether liberty or the vow is in possession. Hence, he is not bound who doubts whether he has taken a

[1] Ps. xlix. 14. [2] Deut. xxiii. 21.

vow, or whether the vow which has been fulfilled has been rightly fulfilled. On the contrary, a vow is binding when a man knows that he has made it, and only doubts as to its fulfilment; or when a man doubts whether he wished to bind himself by a vow which he has certainly made.[1]

(2) Those bound by a vow are directly those who make the vow, and in the case of personal vows they cannot be fulfilled by another. As to real vows, they can, and ought sometimes to be, fulfilled by another, such as in the case of heirs who are bound, not *vi voti*, but either *ex fidelitate*, *aut justitia*, to fulfil the real vows of the testator. A vow as to the act of another would oblige the person vowing in so far as that act is in his power; *e.g.*, parents vowing to dedicate a child to the service of God, either in religion or the priesthood, are bound to use their efforts to this end, but the child is not bound by their vow.

(3) When does a vow oblige? If a given time be determined for the fulfilling of a vow, it obliges at that time. If no time be determined, then the vow should be fulfilled on the first favourable opportunity, morally speaking.

If the time for fulfilling a vow be so determined as to limit the obligation to that time, it ceases if not fulfilled at the prescribed time. But whether the time is determined as the limiting period of the obligation can only be known by the intention of the person vowing.

A conditional vow becomes obligatory as soon as the condition is fulfilled. If the person vowing should impede maliciously the fulfilling of the condition, he would thereby sin against the vow, but would be freed from its obligation according to the more probable opinion. He should repent of his sin as having impeded the worship of God.

3. A delay in fulfilling a vow without a just cause would

[1] See St. Alphonsus de Conscientia, Nos. 28, 29 and 30. *Ibid.*, de voto, No. 2.

be a mortal sin in three cases: (1) If the time be determined as limiting the obligation. (2) If on account of the delay the vow is notably diminished. (3) If from the delay there should be great danger of forgetting the vow or of inability to perform it. Whether outside these three cases any delay in fulfilling a vow would amount to a mortal sin is not quite certain. St. Alphonsus, however, thinks that to defer the fulfilment of a vow for two or three years would be a grave sin. Others think that no delay, however long, would be in itself a grave sin.

CHAPTER II.

ON WHAT IS COMMANDED (*continued*).—THE CESSATION OF THE OBLIGATION OF A VOW.

1. The four causes that take away the obligation of a vow: (1) The change of matter or the cessation of its principal end. (2) The annulment of vows. (3) The dispensation of vows; reserved vows. (4) The commutation of vows.
2. The advice of a confessor recommended in all matters affected by vow.

1. THERE are four causes that take away the obligation of a vow, namely: (1) The change of the matter of the vow, or the cessation of its principal end; (2) annulment; (3) dispensation; (4) commutation.

(1) The change of matter, or the cessation of its principal end. Under this head a vow ceases to bind when a notable change of its matter takes place; as, for example, if it become either physically or morally impossible, or unlawful, or likely to impede a greater good. The obligation of the vow would cease also if its circumstances had become so altered that the intention of the person vowing could not be said to extend to such a case.

The vow ceases when the principal or final end for which it was made no longer exists, as, for example, a vow to assist a poor man does not bind when the man becomes

rich. A vow also ceases to bind when the time determined for its fulfilment has passed.

(2) *The Annulment of Vows.*—This is the second cause through which the obligation of a vow ceases. It is two-fold, *direct* and *indirect*. *Direct* when the superior annulling has dominative power, either spiritual or natural, over the person vowing—that is, over his will. The following may be said to have the power of annulling vows directly:

i. A father, or anyone holding his place, can annul directly all the vows made by children under a certain age (in the case of boys fourteen, and girls twelve).

ii. Religious superiors can annul directly the vows of their subjects, except their religious vows and the vow to pass to a stricter Order.

Indirectly vows may be annulled by those who have power over the matter or the thing vowed. Thus:

i. A father, or one holding his place and authority, can annul the vows of his grown-up children which are prejudicial to his paternal or domestic government.

ii. A husband can annul the vows of his wife if these interfere with his own rights or the good government of the family.

iii. A wife can annul her husband's vows if they interfere with her rights; when the wife or husband agrees to make vows, or consents to the vows on either side, then neither can annul the vows of the other.

iv. A religious superior can annul the vows of the novices taken either before or after entering religion, in case they interfere with the regular direction of the novices and the novitiate.

There is this difference between the *direct* and *indirect* annulment: The *direct* takes away the obligation absolutely and for ever; the *indirect* only suspends its observance, and the obligation revives afterwards when the execution of the

vow no longer interferes with the rights of the superior. Annulment of vows either *direct* or *indirect* is *valid* if done without any just cause, and lawful with respect to vows made without the consent of the superior, but unlawful in cases where the vows were made with the consent and permission of lawful authority, although even in this many authors only admit guilt to the extent of a venial sin.

(3) *The Dispensation from Vows.*—A dispensation is the relaxation of a vow, granted by a lawful superior, in God's name and for a just cause. We say *granted by a lawful superior*—that is, by a superior having spiritual jurisdiction *in foro externo*, either *ordinary* or *delegated*. Thus:

i. The Pope can dispense all the faithful from all vows, even solemn vows.

ii. Bishops and prelates of religious institutes can dispense their subjects from all vows not reserved to the Pope.

iii. Priests who receive *delegated* power from those who have ordinary power may dispense from vows. Delegated power does not usually extend to the reserved vows, nor to vows made in favour of a third party, nor to sworn vows.

A dispensation requires a just cause, so that it would be not only unlawful, but invalid, if granted without a just and sufficient cause, because the dispensation is granted in God's name, and in a matter affected by the Divine law, not in one's own name and right.

The just causes for the dispensation from a vow are the following:

i. The honour of God, the utility and good of the Church or of the State.

ii. The spiritual good of the person vowing.

iii. The moral danger of often violating the vow.

iv. Imperfect deliberation before making the vow.

v. A notable difficulty arising in the way of keeping the vow. Both the person dispensing and the one asking for a

dispensation from a vow without a just cause would sin mortally, as would also the person refusing a dispensation when a just cause exists.[1]

Reserved Vows.—In order that the vows be reserved, it is necessary that they be absolute and determined; hence, conditional, penal, disjunctive vows do not fall under any reservation, because they are not regarded as perfect vows.

The vows reserved to the Pope are the following:

i. The vow of entering a religious Order approved by the Church.

ii. A vow of entire and perpetual chastity.

iii. The vows of pilgrimage, either (1) to St. Peter's at Rome, (2) to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, (3) to the Church of St. James of Compostella, in Spain. Bishops can sometimes dispense in those simple vows reserved to the Pope—namely, in case of necessity and in cases of doubt, and also by delegated authority.

(4) *The Commutation of Vows.*—The commutation of a vow means the changing of its obligation from one matter to another; this may be into something less than that which was vowed, or something equal to it in value, or into something greater and better. When the change is to be made into something less, an external authority and a just cause is required, as this is a partial dispensation. It is the more probable opinion that the same two conditions are required when the change is to be made into something equal; but a change into something greater and evidently better may be made on one's own authority and without any cause. It is usual during the time of a jubilee for all confessors to have the power granted them of commuting vows, except the vows of perpetual chastity and of religion.

Outside the time of jubilee and in all cases, they who

[1] Sporer, apud Goritia, Tab. xlix.

have the power of dispensing from vows have the power of commuting them; and those who have the faculty or power of dispensing usually exercise it in commuting the vows into some good work other than that promised. No one on his own private authority can commute the vows reserved to the Pope, even though the change may be considered better and more beneficial. Likewise, we should remember that no one can dispense or commute a vow whose dispensation or commutation would be to the injury of a third party; *e.g.*, a vow made in favour of the poor, or of some third person, and which has been formally received by these, cannot be dispensed from or commuted unless these remit and condone the right acquired.

It may serve to illustrate this matter to refer to the usual changes made according to the several kinds of vows. Thus, (1) a vow of chastity may be commuted into conjugal chastity, into monthly confession and communion, into the daily recital of a third part of the Rosary, or into fasting on every Friday. (2) A vow of religion may be changed into the sacerdotal state, or conjugal chastity, or the daily recital of the Divine Office or the entire Rosary, or to confession and communion twice a month. (3) A vow of sacred orders may be changed into the daily recital of the Office of the Blessed Virgin, or the Rosary, or the Seven Penitential Psalms with the Litanies, into confession and communion twice a week, or into a vow of chastity, or into fasting one day in each week. (4) The vow of pilgrimage may be changed into confession and communion and the visitation of holy places, having regard to the nature and expenses of the pilgrimage, so as to observe a certain measure and proportion in the other good works enjoined.

These few items may show us clearly what is meant by the commutation of vows. There should always be a just cause, as I have already said, when the change is to be

made into an equal work, and a greater reason when the change is to be made into something less. When there is no cause or reason for the commutation, it would be a grave sin to commute a vow into something notably less, and the commutation would be null and void—as, for example, to change a vow to fast for a day into the recital of *two Paters* and *Aves*. After a commutation is made, the person vowing may return to the former matter of the vow rather than execute the work substituted in its place, because the commutation is in his favour; but if he does not perform the original vow, he is certainly bound by the virtue of religion to do that into which it has been commuted, and this under mortal or venial sin, according to the gravity or levity of the matter. If the work substituted become impossible, or an unfit matter of obligation, the person vowing is not bound to return to the original vow, but is freed entirely from its obligation. This is the case whenever the commutation has to be made by external authority.

2. The explanation of all these particulars regarding vows may be of general use to the faithful. At the same time, the full knowledge of these things belongs to the confessors, to whom all doubts concerning vows should be referred. As we have seen, there are different kinds of vows as to their nature and obligations, and it is not easy for ordinary Christians to guide themselves as to these obligations. In consulting our confessors on the advisability of making vows, or of obtaining a dispensation from them, we should act and speak with candour, sincerity, and good faith. Especially in the case of a dispensation or commutation it is necessary to make known the real reasons for which it is asked, inasmuch as a dispensation or commutation granted on false pretexts or obtained through fraud would be null and void, and we should still be debtors to God, and bound by the obligations of our vows.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT (continued).

CHAPTER III.

ON WHAT IS COMMANDED (*continued*).—LAWFUL OATHS.

1. The definition and the nature of an oath. Division of oaths: (1) Explicit and implicit. (2) Assertory, promissory, and execratory. (3) Solemn and simple; absolute and conditional; judicial and extra-judicial.
2. The various kinds of oaths illustrated by Scripture examples.
3. How we may know whether an expression contains an oath or not.
4. The lawfulness of an oath proved by various arguments.
5. The conditions required for a lawful oath: (1) Truth. (2) Judgment. (3) Justice.
6. Objections answered against the lawfulness of an oath.
7. The obligation of an oath.
8. How the obligation of an oath may cease.
9. Conclusions from the foregoing doctrine.

Lawful Oaths.—God and His holy Name may be honoured by oaths—that is, swearing by His holy Name in judgment, in justice and in truth, when necessity requires it.

On the subject of oaths, we have to treat of the nature of an oath and of its obligation.

1. An oath is to call God to witness the truth of what we say, or, in other words, it is to invoke the name of God in testimony of something. He who swears invokes the Divine testimony to confirm those things which he says. Nothing, as St. Thomas tells us, can be confirmed except by something better and more certain than itself; and hence when a man swears he thereby professes God to be

the most excellent being, whose testimony is indefectible and whose knowledge is universal, and thus reverence is paid to God by a lawful oath. To pay reverence to God is an act of religion or *latria*, and hence an oath is an act of religion or *latria*.[1]

For the essence of an oath, it is required that a person have the intention of swearing or of calling God to witness; and also, in the case of a promissory oath, that he have the intention of binding himself, which intention is always presumed when a man swears seriously, unless he expressly resolves not to bind himself.

Division of Oaths.—(1) Oaths are divided into *explicit* and *implicit*. It is *explicit* when made with the direct and express intention of calling God as a witness, as in the expressions, *So help me God;* or *God is my witness; I swear before God.* It is *implicit* when one swears by those creatures in whom the perfections of God are especially manifest, as to swear by *heaven*, by the *Catholic faith*, by the *Blessed Virgin* and the *Saints*, or by any holy thing, such as by the *Cross* or by the *Sacraments*.

(2) Oaths are divided into *assertory*, *promissory*, and *execratory*. An *assertory oath* is that by which we call God to witness that such a thing has been or is. A promissory oath is when we call God to witness that such a thing shall be, which oath will be kept if we use our utmost endeavours to perform what we have thus sworn, although the effect may be impeded by many invincible obstacles intervening.

The following conditions are always to be understood in a promissory oath: (1) If the thing be morally and physically possible. (2) Saving the right of superiors in those things which depend upon their authority either in prohibiting or annulling, or dispensing from, the oath. (3) Unless its obligation be remitted by those in whose favour it has

[1] St. Thom. 22 Q., 89, a 4 in c.

been made. (4) If the thing remain in the same state—that is, supposing things to remain as they are. (5) If the other party keeps faith—that is, in a contract or agreement it is understood that each party fulfils his share, or what he has promised on oath, when the oaths are reciprocal. (6) Without prejudice to myself or another, as in the case of an oath to keep a natural secret, in which oath is to be understood the condition that my silence be not prejudicial or to the grave injury of myself or another.

An *execratory oath* is that by which a man, in order to obtain faith in what he says, calls down some evil upon himself or others belonging to him unless it is so and so, as he asserts it to be; *e.g.*, that God may strike him dead, or that the devil may take him. So that an execratory oath is that in which God is invoked as a witness and as an avenger.

(3) Oaths are either *solemn* or *simple*, *absolute* or *conditional*, *judicial* or *extra-judicial*.

2. We have Scriptural examples of these various kinds of oaths.

Explicit (2 Cor. i. 23)—*But I call God to witness upon my soul*, etc.

Implicit (Deut. iv. 26)—Moses said: *I call this day heaven and earth to witness that you shall quickly perish.*

Assertory (1 Kings xii. 5)—Samuel said to the people *The Lord is witness against you, and His anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand.*

Promissory (Gen. xlvii. 31)—Joseph swore to his father that he would bury him in the tomb of his ancestors.

Absolute (Judges xxi. 1)—*Now the children of Israel had all sworn in Mespha, saying, None of us shall give of his daughters to the children of Benjamin to wife.*

Conditional (Josue ii. 12)—The spies to Rahab, if she would not betray them.

Solemn (Gen. xxxi. 44 *et seq.*)—The oath between Jacob and Laban, and the solemnities that accompanied it by erecting a stone, etc.

Simple (1 Kings xx. 13)—The oath between David and Jonathan: *May the Lord do so and so to Jonathan and still more. But if my father shall continue in malice against thee, I will discover it to thy ear, and will send thee away, that thou mayst go in peace, and the Lord be with thee, as He hath been with my father.*

Judicial (Josue vii. 19)—*And Josue said to Achan: My son, give glory to the Lord God of Israel, and confess, and tell me what thou hast done; hide it not.*

Extra-judicial (4 Kings ii. 2)—Eliseus said: *As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.*

3. These examples illustrate the different oaths, and at the same time they contain some of the *formulas* used in swearing. To know whether an expression contains an oath, we must attend to two things: (1) Whether it contains, either explicitly or implicitly, the invocation of Divine testimony; (2) whether it be used to affirm, to confirm, or to deny something. We should also take into consideration the mind of the speaker, the various circumstances of the occasion, and the usual meaning or acceptation of the words used.

We have now to consider when an oath is lawful, and under what conditions.

4. It is certain that an oath is lawful when taken with fitting solemnity, before duly-constituted authority, when called upon by the law of the land to do so. We have, in proof of this, the example of our Saviour Himself, Who was put upon His oath at the trial before the high-priest, according to the Jewish formula of administering an oath: *I adjure Thee by the living God, tell us if Thou be Christ, the Son of God.* Jesus, Who up to that time kept silence,

when the oath was administered immediately answered that He was.[1] God Himself has given us an example, for He has sworn sometimes by Himself and sometimes by His holiness: *The Lord hath sworn by His holiness*, saith the prophet.[2] And in Genesis we have the words: *By my own self have I sworn, saith the Lord: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for My sake.*[3] *Wherein God*, saith the Apostle, *meaning more abundantly to show to the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed an oath.*[4] If God, the Holy and All-Just, thus swears by Himself, it must be lawful for us to do the same. We find examples of holy personages in the Old and in the New Testament swearing on certain occasions, and in no place do we find them blamed for doing so. Thus, Abraham made his servant swear that he would not take a wife for his son of the daughters of the Chanaanites.[5] *Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac.*[6] Saul, after listening to Jonathan, swore that David should not die.[7] David also swore, as is evident from the words addressed to him by Bethsabee: *My lord, thou didst swear to thy handmaid, by the Lord thy God, saying: Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and shall sit on my throne.*[8]

St. Augustine in his 180th sermon (*De verbis Dom.*) says: 'That you may know that it is no sin to swear what is true we find that the Apostle Paul swore: *I die daily, I protest by your glory.*'[9] *By your glory* is an oath. There is another oath more express and certain, when he says: *I call God to witness on my soul*, etc.[10] And in another place he says: *Now the things which I write to you, behold before God I lie not.*[11]

[1] St. Matt. xxvi. 63
[2] Amos iv. 2.
[3] Gen. xxii. 16.
[4] Heb. vi. 17.
[5] Gen. xxiv 3.
[6] *Ibid.* xxxi. 53.
[7] 1 Kings xix. 6.
[8] 3 Kings i. 17.
[9] 1 Cor. xv. 31.
[10] 2 Cor. i. 23.
[11] Gal. i. 20.

God does not only permit—He commands us to swear by His name when He says: *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him only; to Him thou shalt adhere, and shalt swear by His name.*[1] Therefore we may argue, if it is our duty to fear Him, and serve Him, and adhere to Him, it is our duty also to swear by His name.

The reason for lawful swearing is given by St. Paul when he says: *For men swear by one greater than themselves; and an oath for confirmation is an end of all their controversy.*[2] Finally, St. John in the Apocalypse represents to us an Angel standing upon the sea and upon the earth, who lifted up his hand to heaven and swore by Him that liveth for ever and ever.[3] We may therefore say that the object here sought to be attained, namely, the ending of strife, is certainly a most laudable one; and if an Angel for a charitable purpose sweareth by Him that liveth for ever and ever, it must be lawful and useful for us to do so. We thereby exalt God as the *living* God, as we acknowledge Him to be ever-present, hearing our oaths; that He is all-powerful to punish any breach of them. It is, then, a truly religious act sometimes to swear; and our Lord's prohibition, *Swear not at all*, cannot and does not extend to lawful oaths.

From all that has been advanced, our conclusion is—not only we *may*, but we *must*, bind ourselves by lawful oaths when required to do so by July-constituted authority, in accordance with God's command: *If any one sin, and hear the voice of one swearing, and is a witness either because he himself hath seen, or is privy to it: if he do not utter it, he shall bear his iniquity.*[4]

There have at different times been heretics, as the Pelagians, Wicliffites, Anabaptists, and in our own day Quakers, who denied that it was ever lawful to take an oath.

[1] Deut. x. 20. [2] Heb. vi. 16. [3] Apoc. x. 5, 6. [4] Lev. v. 1.

It has been said that at the present time there is a growing dislike to the frequent administration of oaths. This does not in all cases arise from a spirit of reverence or deep religious feeling. It may in some cases spring from a spirit of infidelity and irreligion. It is most desirable that all unnecessary oaths, whether in a court of justice or elsewhere, should be discontinued; and an oath should never be administered simply *pro formâ*, as this might be a temptation to profanity. We should always bear in mind, in administering and taking oaths, the principle laid down by St. Paul: *Men swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them the end of their controversy.*[1]

The lawfulness of an oath may also be concluded from its origin. It was introduced through the faith by which men believed that God is the infallible Truth and universal Source of all knowledge; and the same is manifest from the end to be obtained by an oath, namely, to justify men and to put a stop to their controversies. Although it is lawful, and even necessary, sometimes to swear, we must not have recourse to it except for some great utility or good. St. Thomas gives the reason of this: 'That which is not sought except as a remedy for defects and infirmity should not be numbered amongst those things that are desirable; but amongst those that are necessary, as in the case of medicine, which is only to be used in case of illness.' An oath is required to remedy a defect, namely, the distrust of one man in another; and therefore an oath is not of itself desirable, but only to be regarded as amongst those things that are necessary for this life. It would therefore be unduly used if used beyond the limits of necessity.[2]

5. *The Conditions required for a Lawful Oath.*—That an oath be lawful, three conditions or qualifications are required, namely, *truth*, *justice*, and *judgment*, according to

[1] Heb. vi. 16. [2] See St. Thomas, 2, 2, 9, 89, a 5 in c.

the directions given by God Himself: *And thou shalt swear: As the Lord liveth, in truth, and in judgment, and in justice.*[1]

(1) *Truth.*—A warrantable oath must be accompanied with truth, for it is taken in the Name of the God of truth; and therefore a man, before swearing, must consider whether what he asserts be the truth or not. He should be certain that the thing is as he attests, for a man may be guilty of perjury in swearing that which is true, if he either believe it otherwise or be doubtful of it. And therefore he that is called to give his oath must look to these two things: (1) that his words agree with his mind; (2) that the thing agree with his words. 'He who fails in the second is ψευδορκος, a false swearer; he who fails in the first is επιορκος, a forswearer; and in both a perjured person.'

(2) *Judgment.*—A lawful oath must be taken in judgment—that is, discreetly and deliberately, advising and pondering with ourselves before we swear. And here we must consider both the matter, whether that be right and good; and the ends, whether they are duly propounded by us. And there are but two ends that can warrant an oath: one is the benefit of ourselves or others; the other is the glory of God. And whosoever shall swear without a due consideration of these ends, and a holy and sincere desire to accomplish them by his oath, swears rashly and unwarrantably.

(3) *Justice.*—A lawful oath must be taken in righteousness and justice; and therefore it is very wicked to try to bind ourselves by an oath to do things that are either impossible or sinful. In the case of a promissory oath made to God alone, it should be as in the case of a vow, of a better good.

These conditions may be further illustrated by Scripture

[1] Jer. iv. 2.

examples of those that sinned against them. Against the first condition, namely, *truth*, St. Peter sinned when he began to curse and *to swear that he knew not the man.*[1] Against the second, namely, *judgment*, Esau sinned when he *swore to him* (Jacob) *and sold his birthright . . . making little account of having sold his birthright.*[2] Against the third, namely, *justice*, Herod sinned when *with an oath he promised that he would give whatsoever she* (the dancing-girl) *might ask.*[3] And, again, the oath of those Jews who *bound themselves under a curse that they would neither eat nor drink until they had slain St. Paul* was unlawful, because unjust.[4]

6. There is one objection against the doctrine herein taught as to the lawfulness of an oath taken from two places of Scripture. The one is that of our Saviour: *But I say to you not to swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God: nor by the earth, for it is His footstool: nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King: neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your speech be yea, yea; no, no; and that which is over and above these is of evil.*[5]

The other place is that of St. James: *But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by any other oath. But let your speech be yea, yea; no, no; that you fall not under judgment.*[6]

Now, we know that our Saviour and His Apostle do not here simply and absolutely condemn all oaths, but only that common and profuse swearing which the Scribes and Pharisees taught corruptly to be no sin. The prohibition therefore must be understood of rash and careless oaths in conversation, not of solemn asseveration in courts of justice, and not of oaths that have the above-mentioned

[1] St. Matt. xxvi. 74. [2] Gen. xxv. 33. [3] St. Matt. xiv. 7.
[4] Acts xxiii. 14. [5] St. Matt. v. 34-37. [6] St. James v. 12.

qualifications. The reference to the *throne of God*, etc., is in condemnation of the prevalent hypocrisy of the Jews of that day, who thought that they escaped the sin of perjury if in their oaths they avoided using the Name of God. One of the Rabbinical sayings was, 'As heaven and earth shall pass away, so passeth away the oath taken by them.' Our Lord shows that a false oath taken by heaven, by earth, or by Jerusalem, is none the less a profanation of God's Name. *By the head* was a common form of oath in the ancient world: *Per caput hoc juro per quod pater ante solebat* (Virgil, 'Æneid,' ix. 300).

7. *The Obligation of an Oath.*—We are strictly bound to fulfil a lawful oath. It is against the rules of fidelity and of social order to violate simple promises made to men, and it is certainly criminal to violate promises made in God's name and under His sanction or seal. When we call God to witness, it is to give a guarantee for our fidelity, and to break such an oath is, as far as in us lies, to make God a participator in our infidelity. The obligation of an oath arises directly from the virtue of religion, and for the most part it is a grave obligation. Speaking of the obligation of a promissory oath, this obligation arises (1) from every true and lawful oath, and this even though it be extorted by fear, according to the more probable opinion, because an oath is to be kept as often as this can be done without sin or danger to our salvation. (2) It arises from an oath even when made against a civil law that does not bind under sin. Thus, a man swearing to pay a certain sum of money lost in unlawful gambling would be bound to pay; or a minor swearing to pay back a certain sum of money, borrowed without the consent of a parent or guardian, is bound by that oath. (3) The obligation of an oath is contracted by a pagan or an infidel who swears by false gods.

8. The obligation of an oath may be taken away in the same manner as the obligation of a vow—namely, by

Cessation—when the thing promised on oath becomes illicit or impossible.

Condonation—that is, when the thing promised on oath is remitted by the person in whose favour the promise was made.

Annulment—which belongs to superiors alone, as explained with regard to the annulment of vows.

Dispensation and *commutation*—which can be exercised even after perjury has been committed. These, however, cannot be exercised in the cases of oaths made on behalf of another, and received by him, without his consent. In a case of this kind, not even the Pope can dispense—at least, not without a legitimate reason.

9. The following conclusions may explain more fully the obligation of oaths: (1) A man who does not keep a sworn promise sins against fidelity mortally or venially, according to the quality of the matter, whether grave or light—this is, as I suppose, in a matter that is right and honest—and it is not true, what some teach, that even in a light matter, if a promise be confirmed by oath, a man always sins *mortally* by not fulfilling it. (2) A man keeping a sworn oath in a thing either mortally or venially sinful, as though it were due to God or grateful or acceptable to Him, would be guilty of a special sin of blasphemy or of superstition, if he keeps it as though bound to it by the virtue of religion. (3) An oath added to a contract that is null and void by the Divine or the natural law, or even by human law, would not create an obligation of justice, or any obligation whatever in the case of its being against the Divine or the natural law; if against the human law only, either civil or ecclesiastical, it would, according to the more probable opinion, become obligatory, not from justice, but by the virtue of

religion; and if this obligation were relaxed, or cancelled, or dispensed, no other obligation would exist for the fulfilment of the promise. (4) The obligation of an oath is only personal, and therefore it does not descend to successors or heirs, and these are not bound by the virtue of religion to fulfil what has been promised by oath by another. They may, of course, be bound to it by some other agreement or contract.

Let us therefore, as far as possible, follow the advice of our Divine Saviour, *not to swear at all;* but if circumstances require an oath, let it be taken with the greatest respect, considering it not merely as a formality, but as a sacred thing, an act of religion, a holy and meritorious act. Outside these circumstances, let us be careful not to profane the holy Name of God in making use of it in vain and frivolous things, and with much greater reason not to profane it in making use of it for things that are false and sinful.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT IS COMMANDED (*continued*).—HONOURING THE NAME OF GOD BY BLESSING OURSELVES AND OTHERS.—LAWFUL CURSES.

1. How the Name of God may be honoured by blessing ourselves and others. (1) Priest's blessings. (2) The faithful should bless one another.
2. The curses that are not profane, sometimes lawful.
3. The conditions required to make a curse lawful.
4. The objection against all cursing answered.
5. The sense in which the anathemas and excommunications of the Church are to be understood.

1. *Honouring the Name of God by Blessing Ourselves and Others.*—In this matter I may quote from Dr. Hay's 'Pious Christian.'[1] He says that we honour the Name of God by blessing ourselves and others, for we show thereby that it is only from God we expect all good.

(1) This is the part of the pastors of the Church, and it was the case even in the Old Law.[2] In the New Law, in the ceremony of ordination, it is said: 'It is the duty of a priest to offer sacrifice, to bless, to preside, to preach, and to baptize.' And when the priest's hands are consecrated by holy unction, the Bishop says this prayer: 'Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this

[1] 'Second Commandment.' [2] Deut. x. 8; xxi. 5.

unction and our benediction, that whatever they shall bless may be blessed, and whatever they shall consecrate may be consecrated, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.' And at the consecration of a Bishop, the consecrating prelate, after anointing his hands, says: 'Whatsoever thou shalt bless may it be blessed, and whatsoever thou shalt sanctify may it be sanctified, and may the laying on of this consecrated hand be of service to all for salvation.'

(2) The faithful also should bless one another, according to the words of our Saviour: *But I say to you that hear, love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; bless them that curse you; and pray for them that calumniate you.*[1] And His Apostles repeat the same duty: *Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.*[2] *Not rendering evil for evil, not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing, for unto this you are called that you may inherit a blessing.*[3] And this the Apostles literally fulfilled. *We are reviled*, says St. Paul, *and we bless; we are persecuted, and we suffer.*[4] Hence arose the Catholic formulas of salutation: 'God save you,' 'God save all here,' 'God bless your work'; and the blessings given by parents to their children when separating from them during life and at death.

2. Before concluding the explanation of the positive part of this commandment, it may be useful to refer to the curse that is not profane. The statement that a curse may be, under certain circumstances lawful, may at first sight appear strange; but in Holy Scripture we have the words: *Cursed is everyone that abideth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*[5] And the Apostle says: *If anyone preach to you a gospel, besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.*[6] And, again, in another Epistle, St. Paul says: *If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be*

[1] St. Luke vi. 27, 28. [2] Rom. xii. 14. [3] 1 Pet. iii. 9.
[4] 1 Cor. iv. 12. [5] Gal. iii. 10. [6] *Ibid.* i. 9.

anathema, maran-atha[1]—that is, accursed of God ; and we not only *may*, but *must*, say *Amen* to this.

3. Three conditions are required to make a curse lawful : there must be full authority in the denouncer, deep importance in that which is denounced, and an impossibility of employing any other method of guarding against its violation. These conditions, when perfectly fulfilled, render a curse, by whomsoever pronounced, fearful indeed. It is the first which gives such terror to that of a parent, the last to that of a widow or orphan. 'But to render a curse entirely formidable, another element is wanting. It is part of the priest's office to bless, and, though the blessing of the poor and fatherless is valuable, a peculiar dignity is attached to that pronounced by sacerdotal lips.' So it is with a curse. Nay, in the latter case the intervention of a priest is even more essential than in the former. The act of blessing is, in itself, apart from other considerations, salutary to the mind ; the act of cursing, under the same restrictions, the reverse. It is therefore more essential that so fearful a weapon should be entrusted to hands that will use it aright, and that will not prostitute, to purposes of mere revenge, that which it is unlawful to use in such a way. All these elements meet in the curse pronounced on the violators of Church property. The authority of the denouncer, legally unquestioned, morally indubitable, sacerdotally complete. The importance of the thing guarded ; a means of performing the service of God, and accomplishing the salvation of souls. The impossibility of any other defence, for how can a man protect a donation for centuries to come?[2]

4. There may be an objection raised against this teaching, that cursing is a weapon the use of which is altogether for-

[1] 1 Cor. xvi. 22.
[2] See Spelman's 'History of Sacrilege,' Introductory Essay.

bidden. *Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.* 'If we are to take this command literally, at all times and under all circumstances, we are bound to take similar commands in an equally literal sense. Thus, we are bound not to resist an action at law, not to defend ourselves from personal injury, and to yield all that, and more than an oppressor should demand from us. That the holiest of men have pronounced curses on their own and on God's enemies we know; nay, we find a command to do so: *Curse ye the land of Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord; curse the inhabitants thereof.*[1] *Curse the whisperer and double-tongued, for such have destroyed many that were at peace.*

And in what sense are we to receive the formularies of cursing delivered to us in that most awful of Psalms, the 108th? No one, surely, will assert—it were fearful to think it—that they were the mere expressions of anger and hatred on the part of the Psalmist. If he speaks in his own person, his words must be received in a modified and conventional sense. But that they have a wider range than this is expressly testified by St. Peter, who applies the imprecation, *his bishopric let another man take*,[2] to the traitor Judas. David is undoubtedly to be regarded as speaking in the person of the Church, and vindicating to her that solemn right which is indeed hers. That the English Church still claims this function is amply proved by the Commination Service.

5. We are bound, therefore, to conclude that cursing, in the spirit of revenge or on an unworthy occasion, is forbidden by our Lord. And if such an interpretation should seem an explaining away of His words, we should observe that His injunctions against cursing are not stronger than those against swearing. Nay, they are not so strong. It is written, Swear not at all; it is nowhere written, Curse not

[1] Judges v. 23. [2] Acts. i. 20.

at all. And yet, by the general consent of the Church, the command against swearing is to be received in a modified sense. We are not to swear unnecessarily, profanely, lightly, thoughtlessly; but a man may swear when the magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity.[1]

On these principles, and according to this teaching, we can understand the Church's *anathemas* and *formulas* of *excommunication.*

[1] See Spelman on 'Sacrilege,' the Introductory Essay.

CHAPTER V.

ON WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT.

1 What does the second commandment forbid?
2. The various ways in which irreverence towards God may be committed against this commandment.
3. Taking the Name of God in vain, and the nature of the sin.
4. Blasphemy. (1) Its meaning. (2) The several ways in which it may be committed. (3) The nature of the sin of blasphemy. (4) Whether the kind of blasphemy should be specified at confession. (5) Whether it is blasphemy to curse creatures. (6) Five kinds of blasphemy considered. (7) The penalties incurred on account of this sin.

AFTER explaining the positive part of this commandment, we have to consider its negative part, or what is forbidden by it.

1. In answer to the question, What does the second commandment forbid? we have the catechetical answers: 'The second commandment forbids all false, rash, unjust and unnecessary oaths, as also blaspheming, cursing and profane words' (E.C.); or, in the words of the Maynooth Catechism: 'The second commandment forbids all oaths that are false, rash and unjust, and unnecessary. It also forbids cursing, swearing, blaspheming, and profane words' (Matt. v. 34; James v. 12).

When treating in the preceding chapters of the positive part of the commandment, it was necessary to refer in many instances to the negative side of things, to the sins that fall under the prohibition, and in order to avoid repetition I

shall refer the reader to the places in question whenever they occur in this chapter. We may here include under the following heads the principal things that fall under the prohibition of this commandment. It forbids every irreverence towards God which may be committed.

2. (1) By taking His Name in vain. (2) By blasphemy. (3) By unlawful oaths. (4) By unlawful vows, or violating a lawful vow. (5) By profane cursing.

3. *Taking the Name of God in Vain.*—This is done when one uses the Name of God without a reasonable cause or without sufficient reason—that is, without having any just end in view, or without due consideration and reverence.

This may happen in many ways, either (1) out of *impatience* towards creatures, *e.g.*, *My God!* (2) *out of surprise*, *e.g.*, *Great God!* in exclamation; or (3) *superfluously*, *e.g.*, *My God, yes! My God, no!*—that is, by way of interjection, or as a mere *formula*, or through habit. Thus, to take the Name of God in vain is always a sin unless it be through inadvertence, but of itself it is only a venial sin. *Let not the naming of God be usual in thy mouth.*[1]

The same may be said in due proportion of the needless use of the names of the Saints and the words of Holy Scripture. That writer has not expressed himself too strongly on this subject who said: 'I should be disposed to say that a man who deliberately and consciously uses the words of Christ, of Apostles, and of Prophets, for mere purposes of merriment, might have chalked a caricature on the wall of the Holy of Holies, or scrawled a witticism on the sepulchre in Joseph's garden.'

The needless and frequent use of the name of the devil when not in curses, or such-like, according to St. Alphonsus, is not anything more than unbecoming, and not sinful, though such a practice is to be strongly reprobated, especi-

[1] Ecclus. xxiii. 10.

ally when there exists danger of scandal. There was a time when the flippant and reckless use of the Divine Name in ordinary conversation was a mark of a fine gentleman. It is now the sign of vulgarity. This species of offence may be said to be confined now to a certain class of young men who want to let it be known that they have contempt for the habit of decent reverence which they were taught in their childhood. It is a practice that gratifies no passion and promotes no interest, and is on this account all the more blameworthy and inexcusable. It has been said with truth that there are hypocrites in impiety as there are hypocrites in religion. The former are those who make an ostentation of more irreverence than they possess. This spirit seems to be at the root of profane swearing, and those imbued with it may be told that they need not insult their Maker to show that they do not fear Him. It is folly to suppose that any need continue such an evil habit to sustain the reputation of indifference and independence in matters of religion.

To use the Name of God with due reverence even in indifferent things is not only no sin, but, if done by way of invocation, is a good and meritorious work. Two ends can always justify the use of any of God's names, viz., His own glory and the edification of ourselves and others.

4. *Blasphemy.*—The second way in which the Name of God is dishonoured is by blasphemy.

(1) Blasphemy means speaking injuriously or contumeliously of God. In its technical English sense it signifies speaking evil of God, and this is also its Scriptural sense, as we find it in Psa. lxxiii. 18: *Remember this, the enemy hath reproached the Lord: and a foolish people hath provoked Thy name:* and in Isaias: *And now what have I here, saith the Lord; for My people is taken away gratis. They that rule over them treat them unjustly, saith the Lord, and My name is continually blasphemed all the day*

long.[1] It is in this sense St. Paul also speaks, when he says: *For the Name of God, through you, is blasphemed among the Gentiles, as it is written*.[2]

(2) Blasphemy may be committed: (1) By denying any of the perfections of God, such as His justice, mercy, or providence. (2) By attributing any defect or imperfection to God, as want of compassion, causing sin, cruelty. (3) By speaking with contempt of God or of our Saviour, as exemplified in those who were around the hill of Calvary mocking our Saviour, saying: *Vah! thou that destroyest the temple of God, and in three days dost rebuild it, save thy own self*.[3] (4) By cursing God or wishing evil to Him—that is, wishing that there were no God, or that He did not know our sins. (5) By speaking in an impious manner of the Blessed Virgin or of any of God's Saints; also by speaking injuriously of the Sacraments, saying that they are of no use, for example; or of the Holy Scriptures, saying that they contain falsehoods; or of God's Holy Church, saying that she is the enemy of progress and civilization, or that she teaches error, or denying her prerogatives. Of this Anti-Christ will be guilty, according to the words of the Apocalypse: *And he opened his mouth unto blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven*.[4] (6) By attributing to creatures what belongs to God, as did the Jews when they attributed the miracles of Christ to Satan.

(3) *The Nature of the Sin of Blasphemy*.—Every formal and deliberate blasphemy, whether *direct* or *indirect*, either *immediate* or *mediate*, is of its own nature a mortal sin. The reason of this is because such a sin is always grievously injurious to God. And if the blasphemy be *heretical*, then it is a twofold sin: one against religion, and the other a sin of infidelity—that is, a sin against faith.

[1] Isaias lii. 5. [2] Rom. ii. 24. [3] St. Matt. xxvii. 40. [4] Apoc. xiii. 6.

I have said *formal and deliberate* blasphemy, because the sin might be only venial through want of deliberation or sufficient advertence. Words are to be judged blasphemous according to the signification which they have amongst the people of a country, and according to general usage; that is, expressions are such when they are regarded as blasphemous by the people in general and the common interpretation attached to them—although this may not be their real meaning; and, on the other hand, some blasphemous expressions lose their meaning, or have no meaning, attached to them in common use in different countries and amongst different people; *e.g.*, the English *God damn!* the French *Nom de Dieu!* and the Dutch *Sakker domme!* are not considered blasphemous, although their use should be deprecated, especially as they are expressions to which an evil mind might attach their real blasphemous sense, and utter them with impiety and irreverence.

(4) It is probably not necessary to explain at confession whether the blasphemy was *direct* or *indirect*, *immediate* or *mediate*, because the specific malice of all blasphemy is the same. If, however, the blasphemy be heretical, this should be specified, as this would be a sin against faith, distinct from that against religion contained in the blasphemy.

(5) In connection with this subject, the question is asked whether it is blasphemy to curse creatures. We answer, Yes, if this be done with regard to their relation to God—as, for example, to curse the winds and the storms, inasmuch as they are ordered by God; or to curse creatures who of themselves have a special relation to God, such as our souls, the Catholic faith, heaven, and the like. It would not be blasphemy if the indignation were towards creatures merely in themselves, and without any relation whatever to God, such as to curse inanimate things. It would, however, be a blasphemy to curse the whole

world, because, as St. Alphonsus says, to swear by creatures, inasmuch as the Divine attributes shine forth through them, is a true oath, so to curse them would be blasphemy, as God would be indirectly despised in them.

To curse the dead is not a blasphemy, unless we mean the souls in Purgatory or the Saints, because the dead in general have no special relation to God.

(6) Although blasphemy is an enormous crime, it is not always equally sinful; and, in order to understand its malice in different cases, it is necessary to divide it into five kinds or species:

i. First there is the blasphemy of *error* or *ignorance*—that is, when a person makes use of words injurious to God without knowing their full import, and without any intention of being disrespectful to God. On this I have to remark, that it is not necessary for blasphemy to have the formal intention of outraging God or lessening His honour, but it suffices to be aware that the words which are used are injurious to God.

ii. The second is called by St. Augustine the *blasphemy of conduct*—that is, in the case of obstinate sinners, whose disorderly wicked lives are a continual outrage before God. Blasphemers by words are few, says St. Augustine; but how many blaspheme by their actions!

iii. The third is the *blasphemy by complicity*—that is, the sin of those who encourage blasphemers by their approbation or their merriment, and who, having authority over others, keep silence when it is their duty to correct them for their wicked speech.

iv. The fourth is the *blasphemy of passion* or *of impatience*. When one, out of a sudden impulse or passion, utters blasphemous words without attending to their meaning, then it may be a venial sin, but such an act does not contain the malice of blasphemy.

v. The fifth is the *blasphemy of impiety*, which proceeds from the positive hatred of the will against God, which is truly an excessive and demoniacal sin.

(7) The enormity of the sin of blasphemy may be proved from the penalties attached to it in the Old Law, and the manner in which blasphemers were punished: *And he that blasphemeth the Name of the Lord dying, let him die! All the multitude shall stone him, whether he be a native or a stranger.*[1] Core, Dathan, and Abiron went down alive into hell.[2] The son of Salumith was stoned to death outside the camp.[3] Sennacherib, King of the Assyrians, was killed by his sons in the temple.[4] One of the thieves on the cross, and those who passed by, blasphemed our Saviour, wagging their heads;[5] but the Scripture does not tell us how they were punished.

It was on the charge of blasphemy our Lord and St. Stephen were condemned to death by the Jews. And in atonement for this hateful sin our Divine Saviour underwent the pain of being reputed a blasphemer three times, according to the Gospel narrative: (1) When He said to the paralytic: *Thy sins are forgiven thee.*[6] (2) When He said to the Pharisees: *I and the Father are One.*[7] (3) When He said to the High Priest, *Tu dixisti: Thou hast said it.* In ancient times the penalty of death was inflicted by the civil law on those especially who were guilty of *direct* blasphemy against God. The severe penalties against blasphemy no longer exist.

The Canon Law declared that clerics guilty of this sin should be deposed from their office and the clerical state. Lay people guilty of this sin were to be excommunicated. Other penalties against blasphemers need not be mentioned, as they are no longer enforced.

[1] Lev. xxiv. 16. [2] Num. xvi. 33. [3] Lev. xxiv. 10, 23.
[4] 4 Kings xix. 37. [5] St. Mark xv. 29. [6] Luke v. 20.
[7] St. John x. 30.

CHAPTER VI.

WHAT IS FORBIDDEN (*continued*).

1. Profane swearing.
2. What sin is it to swear against truth?
3. Whether it is lawful to swear with a mental reservation.
4. Perjury defined. The enormity of this sin shown by the words of Holy Writ.
5. What sin is it to swear against judgment?
6. What sin to swear against justice?
7. Whether some modern oaths of allegiance and obedience to the civil government are lawful.
8. Whether it is lawful for a Catholic to swear on a Protestant Bible.
9. What is forbidden with regard to vows.
10. Profane cursing. (1) The sin severely condemned in Scripture. (2) Rash curses fall on those who utter them. (3) The reasons why this sin is so hateful. (4) Some particulars with regard to the sin of cursing, and the amount of guilt attached to it. (5) A warning against deserving a curse.

1. *Profane Swearing.*—This commandment forbids all *false*, *rash*, *unjust*, and *unnecessary* oaths.

We have now to examine what sin it is to swear against *truth*, against *judgment*, and against *justice*.

2. To swear against truth is always a mortal sin, even in a light matter, because to call God to witness a falsehood is to wish implicitly to destroy His veracity. This is proved from the condemnation of the following proposition by Innocent XI.: *Vocare Deum in testem mendacii levis, non est tanta irreverentia propter quam velit aut possit damnare*

hominem (To call God to witness a small lie is not an irreverence of such a nature that He could on account of it damn a man).

3. This does not, however, interfere with the opinion of St. Alphonsus, which maintains that a man may swear with only a moral certainty of the truth of what he says, or with a restriction not purely mental.[1] A purely mental restriction would be when no one could advert to the equivocation. Not purely mental would be when from the circumstances one may know that you speak intending something else in the mind than what your words express. As if a priest were asked a question whether he knew a certain thing, he could answer no, and swear to it in case his knowledge of it is obtained only through the confessional. It is in this sense that a criminal on his oath can always say *Not guilty*—meaning, of course, not proved guilty. It was in this sense our Saviour spoke when He said, speaking of the Day of Judgment, that not even the Son of man knew it. That is, He did not know it as man, or, as St. Thomas explains it, He did not know it to manifest it to others. It was in the same sense He spoke when, as narrated by St. John,[2] He said, *I do not go up to the feast*, and afterwards He went; that is, He did not go openly, but in secret. When, therefore, there is a just cause, we can well answer lawfully, and even swear, with an equivocation or reservation not purely mental.

On this difficult question I may add a few words more of explanation:

(1) It is always unlawful to swear with a purely mental reservation, because that is clearly telling a lie and swearing to it.

(2) Sometimes it is lawful, for a reasonable cause, to swear with a reservation not purely mental—a reservation called

[1] Homo Apost., Nos. 14 and 15. [2] St. John vii. 8.

real, or with amphibology, as it is termed. In this case we do not deceive ourselves or our neighbour, but for a just cause we permit him to deceive himself; and, on the other hand, we are not bound to speak to the mind, or according to the intelligence of others, if a just cause exists; if this were not lawful, even with an oath, there would be no means of lawfully concealing a secret, which would be as prejudicial to human society as a lie itself. It is said, for a *reasonable cause*, which means any just cause for preserving the spiritual and corporal good of another. An absolutely grave cause is not required (except in courts of justice and in contracts), but any reasonable cause, as, for example, to escape from the importunity or unrightful questions of others. We have, however, to note that a greater reason would be required for equivocating with an oath than without it; and also a greater cause would be required when the words used are more misleading. If a just cause be wanting, it is more probable that the sin would be only venial, because in an oath of this kind we suppose truth and justice. Judgment or discretion is wanting, which defect is not more than venial. We except, however, the cases that are under judgment, or brought before a tribunal, and those of contracts.

4. The sin of taking a false oath is called perjury; and it is of its own entire nature a mortal sin, for it is always mortal to call God to witness a falsehood.

According to the civil law, perjury is the act, or crime, of wilfully making a false oath, when lawfully administered; or a crime committed when a lawful oath is administered in some judicial proceeding, by a person who swears wilfully, absolutely, and falsely, in a matter material to the issue.

How dreadfully God is incensed by this sin we may learn from the words where He speaks of it in Holy Writ: *Behold, you put your trust in lying words, which shall not profit you: To steal, to murder, to commit adultery, to swear falsely. . . .*

And I will cast you away from before My face, as I have cast away all your brethren, the whole seed of Ephraim. Therefore, do not pray for this people, nor take to thee praise and supplication for them: and do not withstand Me, for I will not hear thee.[1] And again, speaking of the curse that should go forth over the face of the whole earth: *I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts; and it shall come to the house of the thief, and the house of him that sweareth falsely by My Name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof.*[2]

Perjury, even in our day, is punishable by the civil law with fine and imprisonment. And as to ecclesiastical penalties, the sin in many dioceses is reserved; so that all confessors cannot absolve from it.

5. To swear against *judgment* is of itself only a venial sin, provided there be no danger of perjury, because it is only taking the Lord's Name in vain. Although this is true, and that which is spoken may be true, yet it is a sin always thus to debase the holy Name of God, or to bring it to attest every trivial and impertinent thing we utter. No oath is in itself simply good, and voluntarily to be used, but only as medicines are—in case of necessity. But to use it ordinarily and indifferently, without being constrained by any urgent necessity, or called to it by any lawful authority, is such a sin as wears off all reverence and dread of the great God; and we have every reason to suspect that where His Name is so much on the tongue, then His fear is but little in the heart.

6. To swear against *justice* is certainly a mortal sin, if that which is sworn in the promissory oath amount to a grave injustice, because it is a grave irreverence to call God to witness a great iniquity. St. Alphonsus holds that the sin would be mortal even in the case where a man swears to do

[1] Jer. vii. 8, 15, 16. [2] Zach. v. 4.

that which is only venially sinful; but Suarez and most theologians hold that in such a case it would not amount to more than a venial sin, inasmuch as the irreverence would only be light. This is the teaching with regard to promissory oaths. In *assertory* oaths, it is the more probable opinion that the oath against justice would only be venial, because the oath regards the assertion more as true than as bad, unless where the oath is used as the instrument or medium of the sin, such as to swear in order to confirm a calumny or detraction.

There are one or two other questions of importance concerning oaths, to which it may be well to direct attention.

7. The first is, whether the oaths of obedience or allegiance to the civil power or the civil laws of the realm are lawful, and to be observed; such, for example, as to observe the American Constitution, taken by Americans; or the oath required from Italians of fidelity and obedience to Victor Emmanuel and his successors, as Kings of Italy. This latter is certainly not lawful, according to the decree of the Congregation of S. Penitentiaria of December 10, 1860. The answer given was: *Juramentem quod exponitur, non licere: tolerari autem posse juramentum obedientiæ mere passivæ in iis omnibus quæ legibus divinis et ecclesiasticis non adversantur juxta formam a S. M. Pii VII. approbatam.* The oath as propounded is not lawful; but it may be tolerated by passive obedience in all those things that are not opposed to the Divine and ecclesiastical laws, according to the form approved by his Holiness Pope Pius VII.

The form approved by Pius VII. in 1808 is to submit and to obey in all that is not contrary to the law of God and the law of the Church. The same limitation must be made with regard to the oath of allegiance exacted towards any civil constitution or government, and such enactments can only be tolerated in so far as they are not contrary to

the Divine or ecclesiastical law, which applies especially to the *formula* prescribed by the Spanish Government in 1869.

8. Another question arises in connection with oaths—namely, whether in a court of justice it is lawful for a Catholic to swear on a Protestant Bible. As the custom is to kiss the Book of the Gospels when an oath is judicially administered, this could not be lawful if such an act would imply an approval of the Protestant version of the Scriptures, or if it would occasion scandal. The difficulty with regard to this matter may be easily avoided in these countries, as the officials are supposed to give a Catholic version of the Testament if it be required, or the person to be sworn may bring a Catholic copy with him, and use it.

In the year 1869 it was represented to the Holy See that in many parts of India Catholics were required to swear on the Bible corrupted by Protestants and used by the State, and it was most difficult to obtain leave from the Government for the Catholics to use a copy of their own version of the Bible. All the Vicars Apostolic in whose missions this practice prevailed were instructed to use every effort to obtain from the Indian Government liberty for the faithful to swear on the Book of the Holy Scriptures approved by the Church, and if they failed in this they were to remain prudently silent. In the meantime they were to see whether the Bibles of heretics used for this purpose were substantially corrupted; whether they were offered on these occasions that they might be approved by the Catholics, or in order to exclude the Latin Vulgate; finally, by whom, under what circumstances, and for what object, the oaths were required.[1] We may therefore understand from the Instructions of the S. Congregation the several things to be considered before giving a final decision on a question of this kind.

[1] Inst. S. C. De P. F., December 8, 1869.

9. *What is Forbidden with regard to Vows.*—First, we are strictly forbidden to vow to do an evil action, as such a vow would be insulting to God; and we are also forbidden to vow anything that is unworthy of God.

Secondly, we are strictly bound to keep our lawful vows. If we are obliged in strict justice to keep to the contracts, promises, and engagements made with our fellow-men, how much more does the fidelity we owe to God oblige us to perform exactly the sacred engagements and promises which we make to Him. He expressly commands us to be exact in performing our vows: *When thou hast made a vow to the Lord thy God, thou shalt not delay to pay it, because the Lord thy God will require it; and if thou delay, it shall be imputed to thee for sin. If thou wilt not promise, thou shalt be without sin; but that which is once gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe,* etc.[1] *If thou hast vowed anything to God, defer not to pay it; for an unfaithful and foolish promise displeaseth Him: but whatsoever thou hast vowed, pay it. And it is much better not to vow, than after a vow not to perform the things promised.*[2]

Bishop Hay thus concludes his instructions on vows: 'Though a prudent and lawful vow be most agreeable to God, yet it imposes a weighty obligation on him who makes it. The weakness of human nature and the inconstancy of the human heart may lead us to repent of our good intentions, and therefore we ought never to make vows, especially such as are perpetual, except after due deliberation. We ought to examine our motives, to endeavour to know the will of God, to seek advice in every step we take, and then we may hope for strength to perform our vows.' As I have treated fully on this subject in a former work,[3] I need not go more minutely

[1] Deut. xxiii. 21 *et seq.* [2] Eccles. v. 3, 4.
[3] See 'Convent Life'—'On the Vows and their Obligations.'

into it here, or repeat what I have already written in that work and in a former chapter of this on the vows.

10. *Profane Cursing.*—Lastly, as the Name of God is honoured by blessing ourselves and others, so it is dishonoured by cursing ourselves and others.

To curse is to wish evil to ourselves, or to our neighbours, or to any of God's creatures, whether this wish be only conceived in the heart or expressed in words.

(1) This sin is severely condemned in the S. Scriptures. On those given to cursing we have the following sentences: *Their throat is an open sepulchre: with their tongues they acted deceitfully; the poison of asps is under their lips. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness . . . destruction and unhappiness are in their ways: and the way of peace they have not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.*[1]

(2) The S. Scriptures also assure us that rash curses shall sooner or later be turned back on those that utter them: *As a bird flying to other places, and a sparrow going here or there, so a curse uttered without a cause shall come upon a man.*[2] The meaning of which is, that a curse uttered without a cause shall do no harm to the person that is cursed, but will return upon him that curseth. And, again, it is said that a curse is the portion and inheritance of those that love cursing; thus, *He loved cursing, and it shall come unto him: he would not have blessing, and it shall be far from him.*[3]

(3) The reasons why this sin is so hateful in the sight of God are: (*a*) It is against charity or the love of our neighbour. (*b*) It is against Christ's precept of returning good for evil. (*c*) It is directly opposed to the spirit of Christ, as shown in His life and sufferings. (*d*) It is a perversion of the use for which the tongue and speech were given.

[1] Ps. xiii. 3. [2] Prov. xxvi. 2. [3] Ps. cviii. 18.

(*e*) It is commonly accompanied with great scandal to others, especially to the young and weak.

(4) With regard to the nature of the sin of cursing, and the amount of guilt attached to it, moralists have arrived at the following conclusions:

i. To curse the devil or inanimate things through an honest or good motive is not a sin. Thus, one may curse the day on which he sinned mortally.

ii. To curse human beings and to call down evils upon them, ordinarily speaking, only amounts to a venial sin, because, as a rule, there is not the deliberate and serious intention that evils should befall them; otherwise, that is, if the evil were really intended, the sin would be of its own nature mortal or venial, according to the gravity or levity of the evils wished or prayed for; and to curse another through hatred would be always mortal.

iii. To curse cattle or irrational creatures is only a venial sin, unless it be through some hatred of the person to whom they belong. It would be only a venial sin, also, to curse the weather, the winds, and the storms, when not considered with any reference either to God or our neighbour.

(5) I may conclude with a warning to all not to deserve a curse, as there is great danger of it falling upon us—as may be clearly shown from the history of sacrilege, and the consideration of the curse pronounced on Church despoilers and the violaters of Church property.

And even granting, in some cases, that a person may sin in pronouncing a curse, yet the imprecation thus pronounced, if deserved or provoked, may bring misery on those against whom it is directed. Hence, parents should be warned against cursing their children, and children should be careful not to provoke their parents to commit this sin, or deserve it in any way by their conduct. And it is more than probable that, when an oppressed man, in

the bitterness of his soul, prays that his oppressor may be destroyed, God will hear that prayer, even though it may not have been offered without sin. The man that is thus cursed meets but with his due, even should he that curses overstep his rights.[1]

[1] See Introduction to Spelman's 'History of Sacrilege.'

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE INSTITUTION, HISTORY, AND OBLIGATION OF KEEPING THE SABBATH OR THE SUNDAY.

1. The text of the commandment as expressed in the Decalogue.
2. This commandment connected with the first and second.
3. The meaning of the word Sabbath, and its original celebration.
4. At Sinai the observance definitely enjoined, and the reasons for this.
5. The manner of its observance among the Jews.
6. Our Lord's mode of observing the Sabbath: the works He allowed on that day.
7. The change of day, and the reasons for the change.
8. Scripture warranty for keeping the first day of the week instead of the last.
9. The differences between the Christian Sunday and the Jewish Sabbath.
10. How far the sanctification of one day in seven is part of God's moral law.
11. When the ceremonial part of the Sabbath ceased to bind, and when it became unlawful.
12. The observance of the Sunday binding only by the law of the Church.
13. How far can it be dispensed from, and who are bound by the law?

1. It is well known that in the Old Law sacrifices and other sacred rites were commanded, and that certain days, especially the seventh day, or the last day of every week, besides other feast days, were set apart as days of rest and for the service and worship of God. In the Decalogue the precept is thus expressed: 'Remember that thou keep holy

the Sabbath day.' The following is the full Scriptural text of this commandment :

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and shalt do all thy works. But on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; thou shalt do no work on it, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy beast, nor the stranger that is within thy gates.[1]

2. This commandment is closely connected with the first and the second. The first teaches us how we are to acknowledge God, and Him alone, for our God ; how we are to adore and worship Him. The second teaches us how with the mouth we are to honour His holy Name and His Word. And this commandment teaches how we are to consecrate His day, and so all days, to His service.

Before speaking specially of the necessity and the utility of the sanctification of the Sunday or the Lord's Day, it will be necessary to refer to the history of the Sabbath, and how the change of day was effected.

3. The word Sabbath is derived from *shabath*, to cease to do, to rest, and it means a day of rest.

Some maintain that the consecration of the Sabbath was coeval with the creation, according to the words : *And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made ; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. And He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.*[2] From these words we cannot conclude that God commanded men to sanctify the seventh day, but it is simply asserted that God Himself *blessed* it and *sanctified* it.

A trace of the observance of the Sabbath may be found in the regulations concerning the collection of manna in the wilderness before the Israelites reached Sinai : '*Gather it six days ; but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord,*

[1] Exod. xx. 8 *et seq.* [2] Gen. ii. 2, 3.

therefore it shall not be found.[1] This is regarded by many as the first account of the institution of the Sabbath, which was soon after ratified by the third commandment.

4. At Sinai the observance was definitely enjoined, and three reasons are given for this: (1) As a commemoration of the creation: *For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth . . . and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.*[2] (2) As a memorial of deliverance out of Egypt: *The Lord thy God brought thee out from thence (Egypt) . . . Therefore hath He commanded thee that thou shouldst observe the Sabbath day.*[3] (3) As a sign of a perpetual covenant between God and the children of Israel: *Let the children of Israel keep the Sabbath, and celebrate it in their generations. It is an everlasting covenant between Me and the children of Israel, and a perpetual sign.*[4]

5. This commandment among the Jews forbade all unnecessary work; and all persons found working on the Sabbath were to be stoned. In Numbers we read of a man who was stoned for gathering sticks on the Sabbath. Our Lord strongly condemned the Jewish idea of the Sabbath, and the meaning of the commandment is best gathered from our Lord's own teaching. I may here give an outline of the Jewish observance of the Sabbath.

This seventh day of rest, the Sabbath, is not limited to twenty-four hours, but still continues. God does not desist from working for man's happiness and preservation: *My Father worketh until now, and I work*, says Christ, the Son of God.

It must be remembered, also, that God's seventh day inaugurated man's first day on the earth, and He ordained this day of rest, the seventh solar day, to be maintained in

[1] Exod. xvi. 26.
[2] *Ibid.* xx. 11.
[3] Deut. v. 15.
Exod. xxxi. 16. 17.

perpetuity for the good of mankind ; and God sanctified it by setting it apart for holy purposes.

Finding it neglected, we may suppose, from no record being kept of its observance by the patriarchs, unless the week of seven days which is referred to in Genesis[1] implies the keeping of the seventh day, the Sabbath was impressively forced on the Israelites by the double supply of manna in the wilderness on the sixth day and none on the seventh ; and a little later by an especial injunction for its observance introduced among the Ten Commandments delivered to Moses by God Himself on Mount Sinai : *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day*, etc.

The word *remember* would naturally lead to the inference that the Sabbath law had not been quite forgotten. We know, moreover, that the week of seven days has prevailed among all nations from the very remotest times.

If the six days of creation were truly six periods of immense duration, and not simply natural days of twenty-four hours, then we may suppose that the six days' work and the Sabbath day of the third commandment are commemorative types of the Creation, designed to impress perpetually upon the human race man's origin and his duty to his Creator.[2]

Under the Mosaic dispensation we have the Sabbath festivals, and the first of these was the weekly Sabbath, or *day of rest*. In the supposition that God instituted the weekly Sabbath at the creation for the good of man, as well for his temporal as his eternal interests, it had probably been discontinued while the Israelites were in Egypt ; hence the word *remember* at the beginning of this commandment.

In its celebration the Jews held holy convocations or assemblies for public worship, and all labour of man and

[1] Gen. xxix. 27, 28 ; viii. 10-12.
[2] See Pinnock's ' Bible and Contemporary History.'

beast was prohibited. After the Captivity more restrictions were imposed. No marketing was allowed (Neh. x. 31); no travelling beyond three-quarters of a mile; no healing of the sick, no carrying a bed; no plucking of ears of corn, as is shown by the Gospel history. The priestly course in the service of the tabernacle was changed, the burnt-offerings were doubled, and the shewbread was this day usually renewed (Lev. xxiv. 8).

6. 'Our Lord's mode of observing the Sabbath was one of the main features of His life, which His Pharisaic adversaries most eagerly watched and criticised. They had invented many prohibitions respecting the Sabbath, of which we find nothing in the original institution. Some of these prohibitions were fantastic and arbitrary. . . . That this perversion of the Sabbath had become very general in our Saviour's time is apparent both from the recorded objections to acts of His on that day, and from His marked conduct on occasions to which those objections were sure to be urged.'[1]

Christ allowed the following classes of works on the Sabbath:

(1) *Works of Necessity.*—Christ justified His disciples for plucking the corn and husking it on the Sabbath day.

(2) *Works of Mercy.*—Christ declared that it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days,[2] and performed the following works on the Sabbath:

Healing the man with the withered hand;
The cripple at the pool of Bethsaida;
The woman with the spirit of infirmity;
The man with the dropsy;
The man who was born blind.

(3) *Works connected with Public Worship.—On the Sabbath days the priests in the temple break the Sabbath, and are without blame.*[3]

[1] Smith's 'Bible Dictionary.' [2] St. Matt. xii. 12. [3] *Ibid.* xii. 5.

Our Lord summed up His teaching in the sentence: *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath*, meaning thereby that the Sabbath was ordained by God for man's spiritual and physical needs, and that man was not created simply to keep Sabbaths according to the fixed and arbitrary rules laid down by the Jews.

7. *The Change of Day.*—The Jews kept the Sabbath on the *seventh* day, but Christians keep the Sabbath on the first day of the week. Why this change?

Because the Jews kept the Sabbath in commemoration (1) of the creation; (2) of the Exodus, or deliverance out of Egypt. The Christians keep the Sabbath in remembrance (1) of the resurrection of Chirst; (2) of redemption from the bondage of sin and Satan, redemption being more important and a higher work than creation. Since the giving of the law God has done an infinitely greater thing than the creation of the world, for He has redeemed it by the sufferings and death of His only begotten Son. It is reasonable, then, to change the day, and it would be unbecoming to keep a day in memory of the lesser work, when a far greater has since been revealed to us. It is true that Christ rested in the grave on the Jewish Sabbath, but we celebrate not His rest, but His triumph; for whilst He was held by death He was in a state of humiliation, but when He rose again He rose to glory.

8. Besides the reasonableness of the change of day, we have Scripture warranty for the sanctifying of the first day of the week instead of the last.

(1) On the *first* day our Lord rose from the dead.

(2) On the *first* day (Pentecost) the Holy Ghost descended on the Church.

(3) Our Lord appeared to His Apostles twice on the *first* day—viz.: (1) On the day of His resurrection to the ten Apostles, Thomas being absent. (2) On the same day

of the week after to the eleven Apostles, Thomas being present.

(4) On the *first* day the first disciples were wont to meet together for the breaking of bread.

(5) In the Apocalypse[1] the *first* day is called the Lord's day, the Lord's day, Κυρίακὴ ἡμερα, being a day specially dedicated to our Lord Jesus Christ.

9. We have now to note the differences between the Christian Sunday and the Jewish Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath differs from the Christian in the following particulars:

(1) The day is changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, and we no longer observe the Sabbath from sunset to sunset.

(2) Such Jewish restrictions are annulled as to do no manner of work—to cook no food, to light no fire, to carry no burden.

(3) The penalty no longer exists. That penalty was death, and no Christian judge or magistrate was ever empowered to pass sentence of stoning upon anyone breaking the third commandment.

(4) The grounds and purposes of the institution are changed. The purpose of the Sabbath was to commemorate God's rest after the creation, or the deliverance of the Jews from the bondage of Egypt. The Christian Sunday commemorates the resurrection of Christ, and the redemption of the human race from the bondage of sin and Satan.

(5) Obedience to the law of the Sabbath required physical rest, and nothing more; neither public nor private worship constituted any part of the obligation which was imposed upon the Jews by this commandment. The great and primary object for which the Christian Sunday is set apart is that we may have time and opportunity for prayer

[1] Apoc. i. 10

and worship, going to the Sacraments, hearing instructions, and reading good books.

In contrasting the Jewish Sabbath with the Christian Sunday, it appears that the Sabbath was originally regarded only as a day of rest. After the Captivity the Jews used to assemble on that day in their synagogues for worship, because, as it would seem, they were free from secular business. From the very beginning of Christianity the Sunday was instituted as a day of worship; rest was attached to it in order that the worship might be possible. It may be said that in the Jewish Sabbath the rest came first and the worship after; in the Christian Sunday the worship came first and the rest after. To the idea of the Jewish Sabbath, rest was essential, worship was an accident; to the idea of the Sunday, worship is essential and rest an accident.

10. It is a question controverted amongst moralists, how far the sanctification of one day in seven is part of God's moral law. Some contend that it is wholy ceremonial, and as such utterly abolished by Christ. Others make it wholly moral, and affirm that the observance of the very seventh day from the creation is a law of nature and of perpetual obligation.

By the moral law, or law of nature, we must understand that which is reasonable and fit to be done, although there were no express command to enjoin it. To things that are of the moral law we are obliged by the very light of reason and the principles of nature, without any positive command. Other things have been imposed upon men by God which had nothing to commend them but His authority; and such were the various ceremonies under the law, and such was the prohibition given to Adam in the state of innocence, not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The things of the moral law are ordered because they are good;

things that fall under the positive law alone are good because they are commanded.

We may therefore say that a convenient portion of our time is due to the worship and service of God by natural and moral right. It is but just and right that He who has given us life and time should have a large share of it, especially as He has given us both for the purpose of serving and glorifying Him even here on earth. And even if that portion of time were left to the dictate of human reason itself to appoint, we could scarcely set apart a less time for God's service than one day in every week. In the Old Law God appointed by positive precept the exact day and the manner in which it was to be observed. The law of nature does not dictate to us any particular day to be set apart for the service of God; for, indeed, there can be no natural reason why this day more than that; why every seventh day, rather than every sixth, or fifth, or fourth, should be holy; and if we set aside the positive command of God there is no one day in itself better than another.

The Jewish Sabbath was founded on a definite Divine command; the particular day which was to be kept as a Sabbath was authoritatively determined, and the purpose of the day was expressly defined. Also the manner in which the Sabbath was to be kept was distinctly stated.

11. All this formed the ceremonial part of the Sabbath law, and was abrogated by the introduction of Christianity. Like all the other precepts of the ceremonial law, it began to fail in the lifetime of Christ, although then it remained obligatory on the Jews. Its obligation ceased at the death of Christ, and it became unlawful to Christians about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Christian law had been sufficiently promulgated. The synagogue was then, as it were, buried, and it became sinful to observe any longer the *legalia* or ceremonial law of the Jews

12. The observance of the Sunday in the New Law is not enjoined either by the law of nature or by the Divine positive law, but by the law of the Church and the custom of Christian people, derived from the Apostles. This is the common teaching of Catholic theologians after St. Thomas. The Sunday observance imports two things—namely, the determination of the time and the determination of the matter or rite, viz., the resting from servile work and the hearing of Mass, and neither the time nor the rite is determined by the law of nature or by the Divine positive law, therefore only by the ecclesiastical. Not by the natural law, because all that the law of nature dictates is that some time be set apart for the worship of God, but not one day more than another; not the whole of one day rather than parts of several days; not the matter or the rite, because God can be honoured and worshipped in other ways besides hearing Mass and resting from servile work. Not by the Divine positive law, because the law of the Sabbath in the Old Testament, which was ceremonial, has ceased, as to time and as to the rite, as we have already proved. As to the New Testament, in no place do we read that Christ commanded the observance of Sunday by hearing Mass and resting from servile work.

As the law is ecclesiastical, the Church can and has dispensed from its observance in particular cases, both as to the hearing of Mass and resting from work, and the Church cannot dispense from the natural law or from the Divine positive law.

It is not necessary to quote the several ecclesiastical laws and decrees of councils commanding the Sunday observance, and we may be satisfied in applying to this practice the well-known rule of St. Augustine in his fourth book against the Donatists: *Quod universa tenet Ecclesia, nec conciliis insti-*

tutum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi auctoritate Apostolica traditum rectissimum creditur. (What the universal Church holds, and has not been enacted by councils, but has always been retained, is rightly believed to be delivered by no other than Apostolical authority.)

13. Although a particular dispensation may be granted from this law by ecclesiastical authority, not only to individuals, but to whole populations, when a reasonable cause exists, we cannot, however, suppose the universal abrogation of this law, because we cannot conceive a sufficient reason for such a departure from ecclesiastical Apostolical tradition. I may add that this ecclesiastical law is binding on all the faithful under a grave obligation, although it admits of light matter. This is the common belief of the faithful themselves, as well as the common teaching of theologians, and the following proposition was justly condemned by Pope Innocent XI.: *Præceptum servandi festa non obligat sub mortali, seposito scandalo si absit contemptus.* (The precept of keeping feasts does not bind under mortal sin, provided there be no scandal, and no contempt for the law.)

I have said that the law binds all the faithful, because infidels—I mean those not baptized—are not subject to this law, as they are not subject to the Church; and it would not be a sin to require them to work on Sundays and holidays, provided always that no scandal be given.

As we find that the third precept of the Decalogue is not wholly in force in the new law, but only in so far as it comes under the moral law, and that it is tempered and supplemented by ecclesiastical law, it will be necessary, when treating of it, not only to explain that part which is Divine and natural, but also the provisions of the ecclesiastical law for the Christian manner of observing and sanctifying the Lord's Day. This we shall endeavour to do in the two following chapters.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT IS COMMANDED BY THIS PRECEPT.

1. The extent of the obligation in the Christian dispensation—hearing Mass, the affirmative part; resting from servile work, the negative part.
2. The five conditions required for hearing Mass: (1) Intention. (2) Moral presence. (3) Attention. (4) Integrity. (5) The proper place.
3. The causes or reasons that exempt a person from the obligation of hearing Mass: (1) Impotence. (2) Charity. (3) Duty. (4) Custom.
4. Whether those exempt from the obligation of hearing Mass are bound to any other devotion.

1. THIS third commandment imports two things. Inasmuch as it is *affirmative*, it orders the hearing of Mass; and inasmuch as it is negative, it prohibits servile and forensic works, but in a more lenient manner than under the Old Law. We are therefore commanded to keep the Sunday holy by hearing Mass and resting from servile works. Besides these two, all other observances and spiritual duties of the Sunday are only a matter of counsel, as is clear from the Constitution of Benedict XIV. ('Paternæ Charitatis,' 1744). When speaking therein of hearing Mass and resting from servile works, he *orders* and *commands*, but when speaking of other works to be performed on Sundays and feasts, he merely exhorts and advises, as when he says: 'We exhort them' (the faithful) 'in the Lord that they attend at the public prayers and Divine

praises, and hear the Word of God, and that during the entire feast they perform as far as possible works of Christian charity and piety.'

Accidentally, some of the faithful might be bound to more than what is here laid down as of obligation—that is, if some other duty be necessary for the fulfilment of another obligation. Thus, Christians ignorant of their religious duties would be bound to attend sermons and instructions, and they would also be bound to make use of these means if otherwise their faith or morals would be endangered; and I may say that it is not an easy matter for a man to live up to the duties of his religion who habitually neglects to hear religious instructions and exhortations.

We have here to confine ourselves to the precept of hearing Mass, and to explain the conditions required to satisfy this precept.

2. The following five conditions are required: (1) Intention; (2) moral presence; (3) attention; (4) integrity; (5) the proper place. Let us consider each of these conditions separately.

(1) *Intention.*—That is, the intention of doing the work prescribed—namely, of worshipping God by hearing Mass—is required. The virtual intention suffices, which is implied in the very act of going to hear Mass, like the rest of the faithful. Hence, to go to the church in order to speak to a friend, to accompany another as companion or servant, to honour a funeral, or to see the church and listen to the music, would not suffice to fulfil the obligation of hearing Mass, because there is no intention of honouring God or of assisting at the Holy Sacrifice. It is not, however, necessary to have the intention of satisfying the obligation, and one who does not know or advert to the fact that it is a Sunday or a feast-day, but hears Mass merely through devotion, fully satisfies his obligation.

(2) *Moral Presence.*—That is, to hear Mass and fulfil the Sunday obligation, it is necessary to be present both in mind and body. 1. Presence of body.—That is, to be in the church, or so near to it as to form one of the congregation, or that it may be morally said that we are present at Mass. For the presence of body it is not necessary to see the priest or to hear his words. A person may be said to be one of the congregation or of the assembly assisting at Mass if he is so near as to be able to distinguish the principal parts of the Mass, either by the sound of the bell or the singing of the choir, although he may be behind a pillar, or a wall, or in a far corner of a large cathedral, or one of a crowd standing or kneeling outside, provided he be not too far away from the church door. St. Alphonsus allows a distance of thirty yards, but that depends on the circumstances of the place, the accommodation within the church, and on whether the crowd is so continued and united as to form one assembly. A man standing by himself some distance off in a field could not be said to be present or assisting at Mass. Even in this case, if the door of the church be wide open or the windows open, the distance of thirty yards would not seem to be too far. But why not come nearer if there be room enough? He also would hear Mass who from a house near the church can see the priest through an open door or window. One can hear Mass in the sacristy if the door be not closed, so as to intercept all communication with the celebrant; and we may say that even if the sacristy door be closed, and the celebrant's voice can be heard, this would suffice for satisfying the obligation. These are minute particulars that may be useful for the faithful during the time of missions, and on other occasions when churches are too small to accommodate the whole of the congregation.

When it is said that a person must be present in mind as

well as body, we are to understand by mental presence the state of consciousness—that is, that a man be not insane or intoxicated, or asleep during the time of Mass. In such cases he is not capable of fulfilling any religious duty or obligation.

(3) *Attention.*—Attention at Mass is twofold—*external* and *internal. External* attention means decorum and proper behaviour in church, and not to engage in anything which may be to the distraction of others, or may prevent ourselves from attending internally to the Mass, such as seriously to engage in a long conversation, to read profane or secular books that take up the mind at the time, to keep gazing at the pictures, the statues, the inscriptions, or at the people, during a considerable part of the Mass. These and such-like things would prevent the hearing of Mass unless done with interruptions, or in such a manner as not to take away the mind entirely from attending to the Mass. *Internal* attention means the application of the mind to the great Sacrifice which is at the time being offered. This is threefold: (1) attention to the material words and actions of the priest; (2) attention to the sense of the words and the mysteries commemorated and contained in the Sacrifice; (3) attention to God by pious prayers and meditation. To hear Mass properly and with fruit to our soul, it is sufficient to have internal attention in any of the three ways here mentioned. To satisfy the obligation, however, all that is required is the external attention, together with the will or intention of hearing Mass, because by this there is moral and religious presence and the worshipping of God, though in an imperfect manner, yet sufficient to satisfy the ecclesiastical precept of hearing Mass.[1] It is probable that a man might therefore satisfy, in substance, the obligation of hearing Mass even though

[1] See St. Alphonsus, No. 313.

wilfully distracted during the whole time of Mass, provided he observe all the other conditions required. He would, however, sin by his wilful distractions; but only *venially* under this head, because he who assists at any Mass without the *internal* attention acts irreverently towards God and holy things.

Moreover, we cannot say that a person does not satisfy the obligation of hearing Mass, even though he entertain some sinful thought at the time, or be in sin and have an affection for sin.[1] To confess one's sins does not appear to be incompatible with the hearing of Mass or to impede it, when the confession is short and the penitent attends to the principal parts of the Mass; and we may say the same of longer confessions, whenever the penitent is at the same time able to attend to the principal parts of the Mass. This practice of going to confession during Mass may be tolerated, on account of some necessity, as, for example, servants and others who cannot conveniently get to confession at another time; and we may say also that pious penitents who only require a few moments for their confession need not be disquieted if they have to go to confession during Mass in order to go to Communion or to satisfy their devotion. In such cases it would be well to interrupt the confession during the consecration, and to resume it afterwards, so that the penitent may at least attend to that in which the essence of the Sacrifice consists.

Sacristans who have to go in and out from the church to the sacristy, organists and singers who are attending to their music, can satisfy their obligation even whilst discharging their several duties, because their acts are ordained to the honour of God, and they do not impede the necessary attention to the Holy Sacrifice. The same may be said of those who have to make collections at the door or in the

[1] Lehmkühl, No. 558.

church, provided they are able to attend to the Mass at the same time. During Mass it is quite lawful to examine our conscience, to say our penance, to say office or any other prayers of obligation, or to read spiritual books through devotion. These actions do not prevent, but rather promote, our attention in honouring God, and two precepts that have the same end and purpose may be fulfilled at one and the same time. It is not, however, commanded by any precept to recite devout prayers at the time of Mass, but this may be recommended to the faithful.

(4) *Integrity.*—By *integrity* is meant that a whole Mass is to be heard, so that the obligation is not fulfilled if a notable part of the Mass be omitted, either through absence, or by sleep, or by doing something else incompatible with hearing Mass.

As to what part of the Mass is to be considered grave and what part light, we have no definite rule. This must be estimated not only *materially* as to the length of prayers, but according to the dignity and the sanctity of the several parts of the Mass. Those parts are considered the most worthy and the most holy that are in close connection with the Consecration.

It is not, therefore, easy to determine what omission in the Mass would be grave and what light, for although all are agreed that to omit a third part of the Mass would be grave, it is not certain what would exactly constitute a third part of the Mass.

Following the more common teaching of theologians, we may state the following conclusions as accepted, and safe to act upon in conscience.

i. It is considered a light or small omission to be absent up to the Gospel, and, according to St. Alphonsus,[1] even to miss from the beginning of the Mass to the Offertory exclu-

[1] Apud Lehmkühl, No. 560.

sively—that is, up to the Offertory—would only be a venial sin. As the Creed is not a regular part of the Mass, we need not consider its omission as sinful. St. Alphonsus also teaches that it would not be a grave sin to miss from the beginning of Mass up to the Epistle, as well as all that follows after the priest's Communion.

ii. It would be a grave sin according to all for one to miss all before the Gospel, as well as all after the Communion of the priest.

iii. It would be a grave sin to miss that part of the Canon which intervenes between the Preface and the Consecration, or the part between the Consecration and the Pater Noster. To omit the Offertory alone would be only venial. The Gospel of St. John at the end is probably not a part of the Mass, because before it the people are dismissed with a blessing, and may leave if they like.

iv. It would be a grave sin to omit the Consecration and the Communion together, even though all the intervening parts be heard. The same may be said, it would appear, of the Consecration of both species; but, practically speaking, this point demands a very lenient interpretation, for it is impossible to understand how a person could be absent from one part of the Consecration alone, except through some urgent and instantaneous necessity, and going out and coming in immediately in such a case would not interrupt the moral continuity of assisting at Mass. It is not quite certain, therefore, whether it would be a grave sin to miss the Consecration alone or the Communion alone. The essence of the Mass consists in the Consecration, in order to the Communion as to an integral part, and according to this view it does not appear at all certain that one would be guilty of grave sin by missing only the Communion.

v. They satisfy the obligation of hearing Mass who are

absent only whilst the choir sings the Kyrie, Gloria, and Credo.

There remain two other questions to be examined with regard to the integrity of the Mass. First, whether a person who is not able to hear the whole of Mass is bound to hear that part of it which may be possible. If a person should come in to Mass before the consecration, he is bound to hear the rest of the Mass. If after the Consecration, then those who hold the opinion that the essence of the Sacrifice consists in the Consecration say that he is not bound, whilst those who hold the Communion essential maintain that he is bound. If he can only be present up to the Consecration, then doctors are divided as to whether one would satisfy the obligation by hearing Mass in parts—that is, parts of two Masses said by the same or different priests. If both Masses are being celebrated simultaneously, no, because the following proposition was condemned by Innocent XI.: *He satisfies the Church's precept of hearing Mass who hears at the same time two, or even four, parts of it said by different priests.*

Yes, if heard successively, or one after another, and this, even though the order of hearing Mass be inverted—that is, hearing the latter part of one Mass first, and afterwards the first part of another Mass. Those who, with St. Alphonsus, hold that the priest's Communion belongs to the essence of the Sacrifice, require presence both at the Consecration and the Communion to be in one and the same Mass; so that he would not satisfy the obligation who should hear one Mass up to the Consecration inclusively, and then another to the end. But this is not required by those who place the whole essence of the Mass in the Consecration alone. According to St. Liguori, it is not improbable that he who is present at the Consecration alone or at the Communion alone may be said to hear Mass, and to satisfy the obligation as to its

substance; why, therefore, might not he be said to satisfy the obligation who hears two half-Masses, one of which contains the Consecration and the other the Communion?[1]

(5) *The Proper Place.*—What is the right place in which the precept of hearing Mass may be satisfied? The answer to this may be given in general. Any place in which Mass is said, whether sacred or profane, unless it be specially excepted by the Church or ecclesiastical authority. The Church usually excepts private oratories in which the precept of hearing Mass cannot be satisfied except by those to whom the indult is granted, with the exception of some greater feasts included in the indult, and according to the terms of the particular indult. Formerly, namely, from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, there appears to have been the obligation of assisting at the parochial Mass, or at Mass in one's own parish church. In time the churches of Religious derogated by privileges from this universal law; and now the law is entirely abrogated by a contrary custom, lawfully introduced and practised, so that it is no longer a precept to be present either at the parochial Mass or at Mass in one's own parish church. Benedict XIV.[2] furthermore teaches that nowadays a Bishop cannot command his subjects to assist at the parochial Mass, because he cannot abolish a custom which, because it exists everywhere throughout the world, has to be regarded as the common law of the Church.

3. *The Causes or Reasons that exempt one from the Obligation of hearing Mass on Sundays and Holidays.*—These causes are various, and may be reduced to the following four: (1) Impotence, which is threefold: *spiritual*, *natural* or *physical*, and *moral*; (2) charity; (3) duty; (4) custom.

(1) Hence we may conclude that, by reason of spiritual

[1] St. Alphonsus, iii. 310, 311. [2] De Synod., I, xi., cxiv., n. 10.

impotence, those *excommunicated* and under *interdict* are excused, provided they do not keep themselves under that penalty in order to escape from their obligations. By reason of *physical* impotence, or inability, the sick and infirm are excused ; also those on a voyage, those in prison, or those who live in a place where there is no church or priest or possibility of hearing Mass. By moral impotence or inability, they are excused who live a long distance from a church : a distance of a walk of an hour and a quarter to the church is sufficient to excuse anyone ; a less distance when it rains or snows, or in the case of weak, delicate people ; also, under this head, the convalescent are excused as long as it would be dangerous to their health for them to go out to Mass, and also those who are obliged to take care of a house, to cook the food, and do other necessary things that cannot be otherwise attended to, and that are necessary to be done.

(2) By reason of charity, they are excused who have to take care of the sick ; also mothers and nurses who have the care of children, when they cannot take them to Mass with them without great inconvenience and the danger of disturbing a whole congregation.

(3) By reason of duty, soldiers on guard are exempt ; those who have to mind flocks, or who are engaged in necessary public works that cannot be suspended ; servants detained by necessary employment, or who are unjustly prevented from going to Mass by their employers.

(4) By reason of custom, those about to get married are excused, in some places, on the days of the proclamation of their banns ; but this custom should not be allowed in places where the parties can go to another church or to another Mass ; also women for some reasonable time after child-birth are exempt, or in the time of great mourning. But this is to be understood when they do not go to other

places during the same period, and the time ought not to be extended beyond that which is acknowledged by legitimate custom.

4. The question may be here asked as to whether those exempt from hearing Mass are bound to say prayers or perform other acts of devotion to compensate for the omission? They are not bound to any other act of religion by ecclesiastical precept, neither to recite the prayers of Mass at home, nor are they bound to any other prayers or acts of devotion. It is to be noticed that this refers only to the ecclesiastical precept; because a person who might be prevented for a whole year from attending Mass on Sunday is bound to supply for this sometimes on week-days (at least three or four times a year), because the Divine precept is not affixed to any particular time, like the ecclesiastical precept, and everyone should hear Mass, at least sometimes in the year, by Divine precept; for, if by Divine precept, as it is commonly admitted, a priest is bound to celebrate Mass sometimes during the year, the faithful, by the same precept, must be bound, in like manner, to assist at and participate in this Sacrifice of the New Law.

Besides the hearing of Mass, no other duty is commanded on the Sunday, either in the forenoon or afternoon. Nevertheless, the faithful are exhorted to enter into the spirit of the feast, and to sanctify the Lord's Day by other devotions, such as prayer and spiritual reading; attending at Vespers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament; reverent and attentive hearing of the Word of God and religious instructions: for the preaching of the Gospel is the power of God and the salvation of those believing, always remembering that *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*[1]

[1] Rom. x. 17.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER III.

THE REST THAT IS REQUIRED OF US ON THE LORD'S DAY.

1. The origin of the weekly day of rest.
2. Reasons natural and religious for this rest.
3. The obligation of resting from servile and forensic work on Sundays and feast-days.
4. The length of time required for a grave matter of sin.
5. The works that are forbidden. The different kinds of work: (1) Liberal. (2) Common. (3) Servile. (4) Forensic.
6. The causes that excuse servile works: (1) Necessity. (2) Piety. (3) Custom. (4) Dispensation.
7. Honest recreation is allowed on Sunday.

We are commanded to rest from servile works on the Sabbath, and this one day's rest seems to be demanded not only on religious grounds, but also on social and physical grounds.

1. It is said that from the very beginning of the world's history there existed the custom of dividing time into weeks of seven days. Many ancient nations are mentioned as dividing time in this way, such as the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Greeks, and later on the Romans. The same division of time was found in India, and something very similar was found to exist amongst the people of Peru. No argument can be drawn from the division of time to prove that these people observed one of the seven days as a Sabbath; for the practice of dividing time into weeks is one thing, and the practice of keeping one of the days as a

Sabbath is a very different thing It has also been remarked that, although there are many references to *weeks* in the Book of Genesis, there is no passage which signifies that the patriarchs kept the seventh day, or any other day, as a Sabbath. There is nothing about a weekly rest, and nothing about consecrating one day in every week to worship till after the Exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt. Nevertheless, it has been discovered that the tradition of sanctifying one day in a week was not confined to the Jews, but was common to all the ancient world: 'The Phœnicians consecrated one day in seven to the honour of Saturn; the Delphians chanted every seventh day a hymn to Apollo; the Athenians feasted on the seventh day in honour of some deity; some Greek writers speak of the seventh day as sacred, and of the eighth as consecrated to eternal repose. The ancient Druids of Great Britain honoured also the seventh day. The Mohammedans selected Friday, the Chinese Monday, and the inhabitants of Guiana Tuesday, as their day of rest.'[1]

2. Besides the religious aspect, there are innumerable reasons which make it desirable to have a break in the world's business at least one day in seven. Without rest, physical health suffers and the vigour of the body declines. Thus, in the time of the first French Revolution, when an effort was made to abolish every trace of the Christian religion in France, the revolutionists felt that it was necessary to provide for a regular interval of rest, and they appointed a week of ten days, with a regularly-recurring holiday. After twelve years' experience they abandoned the week of ten days, and were glad to return to the older and kinder custom of resting one day in seven. Then, men require rest for the mind and for intellectual purposes, such as reading, studying, that the mind may be withdrawn

[1] 'Catec. de la Persévérance,' par Hauterive, tom. vi., p. 171, note.

for some time every week from the feverish and insane devotion to secular business, which is one of the most serious perils to the moral life of a country.

It is also most reasonable that the merchant, the tradesman, the manufacturer, and the labourer, should be emancipated from the bondage of worldly business for twenty-four hours every week, and be enabled to spend that time with their families and friends.

Leo XIII., in his Encyclical Letter on 'The Condition of the Working Classes,' May 15, 1891, thus explains the reason of the Sunday's rest: 'The rest from labour is not to be understood as mere giving way to idleness, much less must it be an occasion for spending money and for vicious indulgence, as many would have it be; but it should be rest from labour hallowed by religion. Rest (combined with religious observances) disposes man to forget for a while the business of this everyday life, to turn his thoughts to things heavenly, and to the worship which he so strictly owes to the Eternal Godhead. It is this, above all, which is the reason and motive of Sunday rest—a rest sanctioned by God's great law of the Ancient Covenant, *Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day*,[1] and taught to the world by His own mysterious "rest" after the creation of man: *He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.*'[2]

We have now to consider the ecclesiastical precept and the extent of its obligation.

3. There is an obligation binding, under grave sin, to abstain from servile and forensic works on Sundays and feast-days. This obligation begins at midnight on the Sunday or feast, and lasts till the middle, or twelve o'clock, of the following night. This may be proved from the common usage of the faithful, and from the proposition con-

[1] Exod. xx. 8. [2] Gen. ii. 2

demned by Innocent XI. (p. 209). This obligation is imposed through the motive of religion, and religion binds us under a grave obligation. It, however, admits of light matter, which has to be reckoned either by the cause for which one labours, *e.g.*, that there be some necessity; or the quality of the work—for if only small labour be expended, a person is more easily excused from mortal sin; as also by reason of the short space of time spent in labour.

4. It is not so easy to determine the exact length of time that is required for a mortal sin. Some think an hour sufficient; others, more commonly and more probably, require two hours and a half, and even three hours, if the work be not very heavy, such as cutting flowers or doing up flower-beds. A master who on a Sunday would cause several servants to work for less than two hours would not be guilty of more than a venial sin, whether the servants work together and at the same time or separately. I need not remark that by such conduct he might easily give grave scandal.

Servile works are supposed to have been prohibited on Sundays and feasts from the very first ages of Christianity, and by its early statutes rather than by any formal decree or prohibition of recent years; and the universal practice evidently demonstrates the existence of the law and its strict obligation.

We have now to consider: (1) The works that are forbidden on Sundays; (2) the works that are allowed; (3) the causes that excuse from the observance of the Sunday's rest.

5. *The Works forbidden.*—With respect to the keeping of the Sunday, three classes of works may be considered—namely, *liberal*, *common*, and *servile*.

(1) *Liberal* works are those which are done more by the mind than by the body, and which tend to the culture and to the pleasure of the intellect, as, for example, reading, writing, instructing, music, designing, etc. They are called

liberal because before the time of Christianity they were performed exclusively by free people, and never by slaves.

(2) *Common* works are those that are done equally by mind and body, and belong to all classes of persons, without regard to their condition or profession, as, for example, to travel, to paint, to hunt, to fish, etc.

(3) *Servile* works are chiefly corporal, and are opposed to the *liberal* works inasmuch as they exercise the body far more than the mind, as, for example, to dig, to plough and sow, to break stones, to cut timber, to wash, etc. They are called servile because before Christianity such works were performed generally by slaves, called in Latin *servi;* hence the word servile.

(4) To these we may add *forensic* works—that is, civil and judicial duties, as, for example, amongst civil works, the making of business contracts, holding fairs and markets, buying and selling, and all manner of public business attached to shops, merchants' offices, and the like; and amongst *judicial*, the holding of trials, summoning a jury, pronouncing sentence and executing it, etc.

Of these works the following are forbidden:

i. All judicial cases and trials.

ii. All fairs and markets, whether weekly, monthly, or annual. In some places the custom has been introduced or exists of holding fairs and markets on holy days of obligation. Also public business transactions, either in merchandise, or in business negotiations, or in public contracts, and the like.

iii. All servile works, as heavy manual labour. Amongst servile works the following are included by common usage: To print or bind books, to glue together parchment and canvas, to sew, to knit stockings or weave nets; also to make rosaries, scapulars, or wax images or artificial flowers. And these are not lawful if done only for the sake of

pastime or recreation. But as the work is of a light and easy nature, a longer time spent in it would be required for a mortal sin than in the heavier employments.

In these works it is of no avail to plead as an excuse: (1) The gratuity of the labour, because works may be servile and unlawful even though they be gratuitous Payment or wages is external to the work, and does not at all affect its lawfulness. (2) Nor does the intention of the labourer affect the question, whether he does the work for himself or for another, out of mere charity; the work would not thereby cease to be servile and unlawful. (3) Neither have we to judge of the work by the amount of bodily fatigue, for some servile works do not tire the body much, such as knitting and sewing; and others that are not considered servile are laborious, such as to play the organ.

As to *common* or *mixed* works—that is, those that were common to the slaves and to free men in olden times, and that exercise equally, or nearly so, body and mind—we may say in general that they are lawful; and, to be more explicit, we may enumerate some of the works of this kind that may be done on Sundays and feasts, and that are lawful either from the nature of the work or by custom. The following are lawful:

i. To write, even when it is only transcribing, to correct proof-sheets, to draw, to copy music.

ii. To paint, unless it be with large apparatus and much mixing of colours—but this does not refer to house-painting and decorating, which are certainly not allowed—to take photographs.

iii. To go a journey, either on foot or horseback, in a carriage, or train, or ship, or even on a bicycle.

iv. To shoot, hunt, or fish, without great noise or labour, in a quiet way. If with too much noise, labour, and confusion, such as is involved in fox-hunting and races, it would

seem to be unlawful, where not legitimized by custom, because custom allows the holding of races and other amusements of this kind in some places on the Sundays even, as well as on holidays.

v. To prepare food and to cook it, to sweep and clean up rooms and houses, and all the minor necessary or useful household duties.

vi. Butchers may kill on the Sunday, if otherwise they cannot meet the demand of their customers; likewise for the same reason bakers may make and bake bread.

vii. By custom, also, certain works of buying and selling on Sundays are permitted, small things that do not involve heavy labour, and that are required on the Sunday, such as is done by newsvendors' shops, tobacconists and barbers, and the like.

From this enumeration we may be able to judge of other particular cases and kinds of work, and be guided by the custom of the place. Custom may render works that are only lightly servile, and that are in some way necessary, lawful; but it cannot render lawful some of the heavier servile works, such as ploughing, digging, coal-mining, and factory work.

6. *The Causes excusing or justifying Servile Works.*—Four causes may be assigned to excuse servile work on Sundays—namely, *necessity*, *piety*, *custom*, and *dispensation.*

(1) *Necessity*, or any grave reason.—Necessity has no law, and a positive law does not bind *sub gravi incommodo*—that is, under a grave inconvenience. Hence:

i. The poor are excused who cannot otherwise support themselves and their children.

ii. Farmers and agricultural labourers to protect their crops from the weather.

iii. Smiths who have to shoe horses.

iv. Those who have to prepare daily food.

v. Those who have to repair railroads, bridges, aqueducts, through public necessity.

vi. Servants who are compelled to work through fear of losing their place.

(2) *Piety.*—Piety towards God or the Divine worship, or piety towards one's neighbour in works of charity excuses; hence it is lawful:

i. To decorate altars, to prepare for processions and erect temporary altars for processions, to ring bells, but not to do things that only remotely appertain to the Divine worship, such as to make chalices or vestments.

ii. To bury the dead, to attend the sick in urgent need, to make clothes for the poor, to visit the poor, to help them, as well as to assist in all works of mercy according to the admitted principle: *In operibus misericordiæ dierum distinctio non est habenda.* (In works of mercy there should be no distinction of days.)

iii. *Custom.*—In this, as well as in all positive laws, we must attend to custom, as it is the best interpreter of laws. Priests and people can conform to any existing custom, as long as it is not condemned by the Bishop or higher ecclesiastical authority. Hence, it is lawful: (*a*) for barbers to shave and cut hair; (*b*) servants to do house-work; (*c*) in some places it is lawful to hold fairs, to buy and sell, especially eatables and the like.

iv. *Dispensation.*—Labourers may be excused by dispensation, and this can be granted by the Bishop for a just cause; and, in his absence, by the parish priest, and even sometimes when he is not absent parish priests or those who exercise parochial duties may dispense, or, at all events, may declare the law as not binding in cases when they are asked for permission to work, and when a good reason is assigned for working on the days prohibited.

Inasmuch as a Sunday is not of itself holier than any

other day, we cannot say that sins committed on that day against the other commandments of God are more grievous than if committed on any other day of the week, and neither can we say that such sins are sacrilegious by reason alone of this circumstance, that they are committed on Sunday.

7. Besides the works that I have mentioned, of piety towards God and charity towards our neighbour, we must remember that honest and moderate recreation may be enjoyed by everyone on these days.

The Church is not a hard taskmaster, but a tender and benevolent mother; she knows what we are, and she knows what we need. She knows that labour occupies our lives, and that too much of it and continual strain are not compatible with our nature. For this reason, far from forbidding all distraction and all recreation, after we have done our duty, she invites us to rejoice. *Rejoice in the Lord*, she tells us. Recreation is as necessary for us as any of our other duties, and it is necessary in order to perform our other duties well. The Church wishes us to rejoice, but *in the Lord*. *Gaudete in Domino*. We rejoice in the Lord by taking part in innocent amusements and pastimes that are compatible with the sanctifying of the Lord's day. After hearing Mass, therefore, and performing our other acts of devotion, it is right to pay visits to friends and relations; to walk out with our friends and companions; to play and sing, and have music and dancing, and to take part in all the works that are known as *liberal* and *common*. We should be careful to recreate ourselves in an honest and innocent manner, but not to spend the day in idleness and dissipation. The Sunday is a day of rest, it is true, but a day of rest as far as earthly things are concerned—but a day of labour for spiritual things, for the things of heaven and those of eternity.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

INTRODUCTION.

1. The text of the commandment.
2. The reason why this commandment stands first in the second table.
3. The promise appended to this commandment, and its import.
4. The sense in which long life is promised in return for filial piety.
5. All that is included in the words *father* and *mother*.

1. THIS commandment is the first of the second table, and is announced in these words: *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayst be long-lived upon the land which the Lord thy God will give thee.*[1]

It is the first of those that announce our duty towards our neighbour. And it *explicitly* and *directly* regards the obligations of children towards their natural parents; *secondarily* and *indirectly* the obligations of parents towards their children; and also the obligations of other inferiors towards superiors, and superiors towards inferiors.

2. This commandment stands first in the second table, and differs from the laws which follow it in being an affirmative precept; that is to say, while this law commands us to perform a duty, the remaining six, taken literally, merely command us to abstain from sin.

This commandment is rightly placed at the head of the second table of the law, and in its affirmative form serves as a preface to them, as the family circle is the starting-point

[1] Exod. xx. 12.

of every city and state, and the basis of all human society, on which the following negative precepts are founded.

3. On account of the promise appended to this commandment, it is called by the Apostle the *first commandment with a promise*.[1] Not as if this alone had a promise appended, but because that promise is *special*; the promises to the others are *general*. Wherefore St. Thomas notices that longevity is promised to those honouring their parents not only as regards the future life, but even as regards the present life, according to the words of St. Paul to Timothy: *For bodily exercise is profitable to little; but godliness is profitable to all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come*.[2] Piety is useful for all things, and has the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is future And with good reason, according to the teaching of St. Thomas: He who is grateful for a benefit for favour deserves, according to what is becoming, that the benefit be preserved for him and to him; and on account of ingratitude a man would deserve to lose it. The gift of our bodily life we have, after God, from our parents, and therefore he who honours his parents, being grateful for the gift, deserves the prolongation of his life, whilst he who dishonours his parents, as ungrateful for his life, deserves to lose it.

As, however, it sometimes happens that those who honour their parents die soon, and, on the contrary, those who do not honour them live a long time, St. Thomas gives us the following explanations on this head: 'As the present goods and evils do not fall under merit or demerit unless so far as they are ordained to future remuneration, therefore it is for some hidden reason of the Divine counsels which especially have regard to future remuneration that some who are remarkable for piety towards their parents die young, and

[1] Ephes. vi. 2. [2] 1 Tim. iv. 8.

others who are undutiful towards parents live a long time.

4. The Catechism of the Council of Trent, referring to the promise of a long life in return for filial piety, says: 'Many holy men, it is true, Job, David, Paul, wished to die, yet the reward here promised is neither in consideration to be despised. The additional words, *which the Lord thy God will give thee*, promise not only length of days, but also repose, tranquillity, security, which render life happy; for in Deuteronomy it is not only said that thou mayest live a long time, but it is also added, "and that it may be well with thee,"[1] words which the Apostle repeats in his Epistle to the Ephesians.'[2]

The same authority goes on to say: 'These blessings are conferred on those only on whose piety God really deems it a reward to bestow them, otherwise the Divine promises would not be fulfilled. The more dutiful a child, sometimes the more short-lived; (1) either because his interests are best consulted by summoning him from this world before he has strayed from the path of virtue and of duty; or because, when the gathering storm threatens to burst upon society, carrying anarchy and ruin in its desolating career, he is called from the troubled scene in order to escape the universal calamity; or (3) else he is spared the bitter anguish of witnessing the calamities of which, in such melancholy times, his friends and relations might become the victims. *The just man*, says the prophet, *is taken away from before the face of evil*.[3] The premature death of the good, therefore, gives just reason to apprehend the approach of calamitous days.'

5. Now, this command of honouring our parents is very large and comprehensive, and not limited to the

[1] Deut. v. 16. [2] Eph. vi. 3.
[3] Isa. lvii. 1.

grammatical signification of the words *father* and *mother*, but extends itself to all who are our superiors. And that appears because honour belongs principally not only to God, but secondarily, and by way of derivation, it belongs also unto those whom God, the great King, hath dignified, and made as it were nobles in His Kingdom. Hence under the title Father we have to include not only our natural parents, but also our bishops and pastors, the civil authorities and all our lawful superiors. So that the word is copious in its meaning, taking in many other relations and states of men, besides those to whom it is now commonly applied. We have, therefore, to divide our explanations of this commandment into different chapters, so that we may fully treat of the mutual relations and duties enjoined by it:

(1) Of children towards their parents.

(2) Of parents towards their children

(3) Of inferiors towards superiors.

(4) Of superiors towards inferiors.

These heads will include all the special duties founded upon the parental and filial relationship.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER I.

THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN TOWARDS THEIR PARENTS.

1. Love: the manner in which children should love their parents. (1) Filial love in a son illustrated. (2) Filial love in a daughter illustrated. (3) Sins against the love of parents.
2. Reverence: the reverence due to parents.
3 The sins against reverence: (1) By word. (2) By deed. (3) By defect.

By virtue of the fourth commandment children owe to their parents piety, to which virtue it belongs to honour parents and country, according to St. Thomas. The honour of our parents embraces four things: (1) *Love*, by reason of their being the authors of our existence after God. (2) *Reverence*, by reason of pre-eminence, inasmuch as they are our superiors. (3) *Obedience*, by reason of government, inasmuch as they are our natural rulers. (4) *Assistance*, by reason of necessity. Amongst which St. Thomas points out this difference, that to parents as such, and inasmuch as they are our parents, we owe *love*, *reverence* and *obedience;* but *assistance* may be due to them only by accident, that is, in so far as they may need it, and when they need it. We have now to treat of these duties separately.

1. *Love.*—Children should love their parents both with *internal* love, that is, to regard them with a pious and loving

affection of the heart; and with an *external* love, that is, by repelling all evil and injury from them, by manifesting signs of kindness towards them in word and action, and by helping them in their necessities. This obligation is clear from the law of nature itself. No matter what the faults of our parents may be, or how they may have treated us, we should always remember that we owe our lives and preservation to them, which are our greatest benefits. Hence the wise man tells us: *Honour thy father and forget not the groanings of thy mother; remember that thou hadst not been born but through them, and make a return to them as they have done for thee.*[1]

It is not easy to represent the many ways in which children can manifest and prove their love for parents. In a work, 'The Compitum, or Meeting of the Ways,' which so beautifully represents the several traits of a Christian family, we may find many instances which illustrate the filial love of a son and the filial love of a daughter:

(1) *Filial Love in a Son.*—'In the reign of Peter the Cruel, a youth, hearing that his father, in his eightieth year, was one of the twenty-one citizens condemned to death for the revolt of Toledo, offered to die in his place, and the King accepted the exchange.'

Chateaubriand, speaking of the exiled royal family of France at Prague, says: 'The Dauphin watches over his father, Charles X., as over a child. He kisses his hand whenever he approaches him, asks how he passes his nights, picks up his handkerchief, speaks loud in order to be heard by him, hinders him from eating what is unwholesome for him, makes him put on or off warm clothing according to the temperature, accompanies him in all his walks; all his conversation turns upon him.'

Goethe, conducted to the Princess Biscari at Catania by

[1] Ecclus. vii. 29.

the Prince, her son, thus narrates his account of the interview: 'We found a venerable, naturally noble lady, who received us with these words: "Pray look round my room, gentlemen; here you still see all that my dear departed husband collected and arranged for me. This I owe to the affection of my son, who not only allows me still to reside in his best room, but has even forbidden the least thing to be taken away or removed that his late father purchased for me and chose a place for; not only have I been able these many years to live in my usual ways and habits, but also I have, as formerly, an opportunity to see and form the acquaintance of those worthy strangers who come hither from widely distant places to examine our treasure." '

From these examples we may well say in the words of Tragady:[1] 'What an attraction to parents must be the prospect of having children that will prove all through life their sweetest treasure. . . . Oh, if rights are to be the portion of others, and a name alone be left to us, what a treasure is a Catholic son who will preserve the honours and the traditional manners of his house, even to the least characteristic of his father.' *Audi fili mi disciplinam patris tui, et ne dimittas legem matris tuæ, ut addatur gratia capiti tuo.* (*My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother, that grace may be added to thy head.*)[2]

(2) *Filial Love in a Daughter.*—In illustration of this I may quote the following passages of the Romanios: 'The good Count was walking all sorrowful, holding in his hand the large grains of a chaplet on which he used to pray. He was murmuring sad words—words to move to tears. "You are grown up, my daughter, and of marriageable age. It is a subject of bitter grief to me that I should have nothing to give you." "Hush, hush, my father, do not be afflicted,

[1] See 'Compitum,' pp. 124, 125 [2] Prov. i. 8.

for he who has a good daughter ought to call himself rich, and he who has a bad one should burn her alive, not to dishonour his house. As for me, if I am not able to be a wife, I can be a nun.""[1]

The remark at the close of this extract gives me occasion to refer to religious vocations in families that come not through any necessity, but through the love of virtue, and in reference to them here I shall content myself for the present by quoting an extract from Balmez, where he indignantly makes the following declaration: 'True civilization will never forgive Protestantism for the immoral and impious deed of employing all its force to destroy respect for virginity, trampling under foot a doctrine professed by the human race, and ratified by the Divine voice of the Church, not respecting what even the Greeks and Romans, the Gauls and Germans, venerated, evincing more shameless immodesty than the dissolute population of Asia and the savages of the New World. Truly, it was a disgrace to Europe that any of its inhabitants should have attacked what was respected by the whole world, and treated as a contemptible prejudice a universal belief of the human race sanctioned by Christianity. What irruption of barbarians was ever beheld comparable to this overflow of Protestantism, when it swept away that which was most inviolable among men?'

(3) From the Catholic teaching of the love due to parents we may understand how grievously they sin against piety who are wanting in filial love and affection. Hence those children sin, and sin grievously, too, who, with full deliberation and in a grave matter, (1) cherish interior hatred and contempt towards their parents, and treat them with indignation; those who rejoice over their misfortunes, and grieve on account of their prosperity; who wish them evil and

[1] 'Compitum,' p. 126.

desire their death, even though it be with the limitation, not as an evil to them, but for their own benefit—namely, that they may come in for the inheritance, or be freed from vexation and trouble. On this point we find the following proposition condemned by Innocent XI.: 'It is lawful to wish for the death of a father by an absolute desire, not as an evil to the father, but for the good of the person who desires it, because, for instance, a rich inheritance falls to his lot.'

Whilst avoiding all sins of defect in the love due to parents, we have to bear in mind that even filial love must be kept within bounds and made subordinate to the love of God, according to the words of our Divine Saviour: *He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.*[1] We have, therefore, always to listen to a Divine vocation rather than to the voice of flesh and blood, and it is in this sense we have to interpret the words of St. Luke's Gospel: *If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.*[2] We have therefore to act on the advice of St. Jerome: *Ama post Deum, patrem, ama matrem, ama filios. Si autem necessitas venerit, ut amor parentum ac filiorum amori Dei comparetur, et non possit utrumque servari odium in suos, pietas in Deum fit.* (After God, love father, love mother, love children, but if a necessity should arise that the love of parents and children should come into conflict with the love of God and both cannot be observed, then let there be hatred towards them and piety towards God.)[3]

2. *Reverence.*—Reverence means to have that respect for our parents which nature and religion demand. When there is a salutary fear united with love, there reverence is to be found. Love is the foundation, and the essential

[1] St. Matt. x. 37 [2] St. Luke xiv. 26. [3] On St. Matt. x.

foundation, of reverence. The love of reverence is different from the love of friendship. In friendship love establishes equality and familiarity; in reverence the object loved is regarded as above the person who loves, and there is no equality. Thus filial love towards one's father regards him as a man having authority to correct his children in their irregularities, to punish them for their faults, and to direct them in their way of life. Filial love is therefore necessarily tempered or accompanied with a salutary fear. We have in this two motive powers that appear contrary—the one which draws us towards the object of our reverence, which is love; and the other which withdraws us from too much familiarity, which is a wholesome fear.

Respect and reverence for parents is required both by *nature* and *religion*. Children by the right of *nature* belong to their parents, from whom they have received their existence. Under this title they depend upon them, and as a consequence owe them entire respect. It is for this reason that not only the holy fathers, but even pagans, have always placed in the first line, after the obligation of adoring God, the obligation of honouring our parents. *Deus est colendus, parentes honorandi.* (God is to be worshipped, parents are to be honoured.) It is a duty of *religion*. Parents hold the place of God towards their children, and are His representatives, in the sense that they are placed, as it were, to train them in the knowledge of God, and to lead them to Him. *Honour*—that is, *respect—your father and mother* are the terms of the Divine Law.

Reverence for parents should be in the heart and should appear in our manner towards them. *He that feareth the Lord*, says the wise man, *honoureth his parents, and will serve them as his masters that brought him into the world.*[1] Let us attend to the further lessons taught us by the wise

[1] Ecclus. iii 8.

man on this subject: *Son, support the old age of thy father and grieve him not in his life; and if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not, when thou art in thy strength; for the relieving of the father shall not be forgotten. For good shall be repaid to thee for the sin of thy mother. And in justice thou shalt be built up, and in the day of affliction thou shalt be remembered; and thy sins shall melt away like ice in the fair warm weather* [1]

This respect is to be paid to parents at any age and in every position, no matter how exalted it may be, in which sons and daughters may find themselves: as illustrated by the example of Joseph, who left the palace of Pharao in order to go to his father, and at his approach descended from his chariot, and threw himself at the feet of the venerable old man, and manifested even by his tears his respect and tenderness. The same is witnessed in the example of Solomon in the manner in which he received his mother: *The king arose to meet her, and bowed to her, and sat down upon his throne: and a throne was set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right hand.*[2] Then we have, above all, the example of our Divine Saviour, in His respect and submission to Mary and Joseph contained in the words: He went down with them to Nazareth and *was subject to them.*

This filial respect should be manifested in our manner and conduct towards our parents. If sincere respect be in the heart, it will appear externally in tone, manner, attitude, discourse, attention, deference and submission, all of which will breathe the respect and veneration which we feel for them in our hearts. It is also a sign of reverence to follow their counsels and imitate their example especially, and only when their example is good and worthy of imitation This is the meaning of the words addressed by our Saviour

[1] Ecclus. iii. 14 *et seq*

[2] 3 Kings ii. 19.

to the Jews: *If you be the children of Abraham, do the works of Abraham.*[1]

At the same time, we must guard against imitating their example in things that are evil, and against following their evil counsels, as some parents are capable of disedifying their children in this manner. In such a case we have to decline and avoid the fault or sin, but with kindness towards them. If we have to rebel, let it be done in a becoming manner. We can refuse submission, but not respect; and we can always show that what we refuse to men we give to God and to the Church. Due respect, however, need not hinder us from making representations and from remonstrating, but let this be always moderate and reasonable, as becomes the reverence due to parental authority.

3. The sins opposed to filial reverence may be either by *word*, by *manner*, by *deed*, or by *defect*.

(1) By *word*. They sin who afflict their parents by harsh and cruel words, and much more so by cursing them. In the Scriptures it is said: *He that curseth his father, or mother, shall die the death*,[2] and again: *He that curseth his father and mother, his lamp shall be put out in the midst of darkness.*[3]

By *manner or signs*. They sin who laugh or rail at their parents, and who mock them by signs and gestures; who despise and show contempt for them, and who refuse to acknowledge them through being ashamed of them because, perhaps, they are poor and miserable, badly clad, or ignorant. We read in the Book of Proverbs: *The eye that mocketh at his father, and that despiseth the labour of his mother in bearing him, let the ravens of the brooks pick it out, and the young eagles eat it*,[4] which means that God, in a

[1] St. John viii. 39.
[2] Exod. xxi. 17.
[3] Prov. xx. 20.
[4] *Ibid.* xxx. 17.

fearful and strange manner, will avenge that wickedness upon him.

(2) By *deed.* They sin who raise their hands to their parents to threaten and strike them ; who persecute them ; who rob and wrong them, etc. It would be a grave sin in a child to strike its parents, or attempt to strike them even lightly, but injuriously. This crime was looked upon with such horror amongst the ancient Hebrews that it was punishable with death : *He that striketh his father, or mother, shall be put to death.*[1]

(3) By *defect.* They sin who refuse to show their parents the usual marks of respect according to the custom of the country, according to their condition and quality ; who are silent and morose in their presence ; who are wanting in due reserve and modesty in their talk and manner of addressing their parents.

They also fail by defects of reverence who refuse to acknowledge their parents ; who would pass them by without notice ; who desire their parents to remain unknown because of their poverty or their simplicity and want of education. Sons and daughters may learn a lesson, as to due reverence when speaking to their parents, from the example of Jonathan in pleading for David with his father Saul. There he shows mildness and reverence : *Sin not, O king, against thy servant, David, because he hath not sinned against thee. . . . And he put his life in his hand and slew the Philistine.*[2] It is only right and just that in our speech we should give those who taught us to speak suitable language, and to please with our words those who instructed us to form them.

[1] Exod. xxi. 15. [2] 1 Kings xix. 4, 5.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER II.

DUTIES OF CHILDREN TOWARDS THEIR PARENTS (*continued*).

1. Obedience to parents: (1) In lawful things. (2) In things that appertain to their duty and education. (3) As long as they remain under parental authority.
2. Slight acts of disobedience in ordinary small duties explained.
3. Three propositions stating the extent of the authority of parents to command under sin.
4. The right of children to embrace the true religion even against the will of their parents.
5. In the choice of a state of life children are not under the obligation of obedience to parents.
6. Religious and priestly vocations in Christian families illustrated from the 'Compitum.'
7. Assistance the fourth duty of children to parents: (1) Corporal assistance. (2) Spiritual assistance before and after death.

1. *Obedience* to parents is the next duty which we have to consider. We may state the Christian doctrine on this point in a general proposition: children are bound to obey their parents in every honest and lawful command which appertains to their duty and education as long as they are under the authority and power of their parents. This is an obligation imposed by the natural law, and it is expressed by St. Paul when he says: *Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is just.*[1] And in another place he repeats this injunction: *Children, obey your parents in all things,*

[1] Eph. vi. 1.

for this is well pleasing to the Lord.[1] I have said (1) in all things *lawful and honest*, because in things evidently unlawful and sinful children should not, and cannot in conscience, obey. When the will of God and the will of earthly parents clash, there can be no question about choosing to obey God rather than man; for Christ has said: *He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.*[2] But we should first be careful to discover what is the will of God in any given case, and then, when any are called to choose for Christ against their father or mother, or both, let it not be with self-complacency and haughtiness, but rather with the sorrowful heart of a loving child. (2) *In all that appertains to their duty and their education.* In things that appertain to the choice of a state of life, children are independent of their parents, and parents would be guilty of sin by directly or indirectly obliging their children to enter religion rather than the married state, or *vice versâ.* (3) *As long as they remain under the parental authority and the domestic roof*, for when children get married and settle down in homes of their own, and when they enter a distinct home and family in a religious community, the obligation of obedience to their natural parents ceases, although they must always retain their love and reverence.

Two or three points of importance require some further explanation on the subject of the obedience due by children to their parents.

2. First, with regard to young children who are being ordered about from morning to night by parents and others in authority over them, we may say that it would not be right to put down all their acts of disobedience as sinful, and we must be slow in judging them guilty of mortal sin in ordinary and household matters of everyday life. Their disobedience is either through levity, inadvertence, or

[1] Col. iii. 20. [2] St. Matt. x. 37.

thoughtlessness, or some human negligence, and, generally speaking, only in small matters. And in their disobedience very often there is no sin, inasmuch as parents do not, by their commands, intend to bind their children under pain of sin. To be guilty of a sin of disobedience, especially of a grave sin, it is required that the command of parents and superiors be such in the strict sense of the word, and that they intend to bind under pain of sin, and not simply to persuade, to request, or signify their wish. We may know their intention in this respect as to a strict command from the serious and severe manner in which the precept is given, or from the greatness or importance of the thing commanded, or from the penalty to be inflicted for the disobedience. The doctrine here stated is founded on the proper understanding of the following propositions:

3. (1) Parents, like other superiors, can command under pain of sin.

(2) They can command under mortal or venial sin in a grave matter of importance.

(3) They cannot lawfully command under mortal sin in a matter of light importance: this would be *ad destructionem non in ædificationem.* It would be an abuse of their power and authority, serving only to destruction, not to edification.

The obligation of obedience, therefore, arises out of the nature of the command and the intention of the person commanding. In case parents and those in authority do not mean to bind their children under pain of sin, I think no one has any right to impute to the children a sin of disobedience, and parents ought not to intend sin in all trifling and household commands and directions, as they should not give occasion to their children, without good reason, to multiply their sins and offences against the law of God.

4. The next special matter to which I wish to direct attention is the change of religion, or the question of converts.

As far as the law of God is concerned, every child has a right to profess the true religion, and no one can interfere with that right. They have a right, and an inherent natural right, to act according to their conscience, and therefore they can embrace Catholicism as soon as they are capable of understanding their duties to God, especially the obligation of professing the true faith. In this matter they must be allowed to follow the inspirations of grace, and obey God in spite of all the opposition of their parents and relatives. Priests are bound to instruct and receive those who present themselves, in all cases, even if they be only children, provided they have come to the use of reason, when they desire to be received into the Church. Some parents may lawfully and in good faith persuade their children to wait until they are able to judge for themselves, and to put off for a time, as a matter of prudence, change of religion; and I do not impute blame to them, as long as they act through conscientious motives, and not through prejudice or hatred of Catholicism; but yet, if their children persist in requiring baptism and reception into the Church, they may and ought to be baptized and received; they have a right to become members of the true Church, a right not to be deprived of the Sacraments and the means of grace, and a right to worship God according to their conscience and according to the true faith.

5. Thirdly, in the choice of a state of life, either as to the married state, the religious state, or the clerical state, children are not under the obligation of obedience to parents.

With regard to marriage, they ought, indeed, to be advised by their parents, to consult them before getting married, and to show them due respect and consideration in a matter of so much importance; but in any case it cannot be said to be a sin against obedience to get married without the consent of parents, although a foolish and unworthy marriage

may grieve them, and may be entered into against the piety and reverence due to the just wishes of parents.

A son or daughter wishing to enter the religious state or the clerical state should take into consideration the will and judgment of the parents. If parents oppose them, the reason of their opposition must be examined. Children cannot leave their parents if these need their assistance and support. On the other hand, if their objections are futile and their motives worldly, or if their opposition be purely out of carnal affection, children may act without their consent, and even without consulting them follow the inspiration and the vocation that God gives them.

6. Where the Christian spirit exists in a family, there Saints and religious, as well as priestly vocations, are to be found. The author of the 'Compitum' tells us: 'The fact was, that in olden times, and in the ages of faith, many families seemed all composed of Saints. We are not surprised to hear of Clotaire, that towards the end of his life his conscience was awakened, when we find that this terrible king had St. Clotilde for his mother, St. Radegonde for his wife, St. Cloud for his nephew, and the holy Ingonde of Spain and Bertha of Kent for his grand-daughters. St. Peter II., Archbishop of Tarentaise, had for father the Blessed Peter, for eldest brother St. Lambert, first Abbot of Chezeri, and for a younger brother Andrew, a holy monk of Bonnevaux. His mother became the venerable Abbess of Belton, and his sister a nun of the same convent.

The family of St. Leger was as fruitful in Saints as in heroes. It is seven times named among the Saints in three generations. In one century it reckoned five Bishops and fourteen monks. How can we sufficiently estimate the sweet fruits of affection in young breasts who in the Church, as in a second paradise, grow up thus to God? Where there is the Catholic faith, a celestial end terminates every vista

opened by the dearest ties of relationship, and all charities of father, son, and brother. In a curious old engraving, the family of Christopher of Baden, comprising knights, Bishops, and nuns, is represented kneeling on each side of an image of our Blessed Lady and St. Anne, caressing our infant Lord. Sweet and moving scene, which could be witnessed every Sunday and festival formerly in France; for there, says the author of the 'Compitum,' 'I used to mark whole families going together to the churches—grandfather and grandmother, with their children and their grandchildren, the servant with his master, the maid by the side of her mistress, a spectacle of domestic union and the only true equality, which sophists, after all their revolutions, will never produce.'[1]

7. *Assistance.*—The assistance to be given by children to their parents is twofold, according as the necessities of parents may be either *corporal* or *spiritual.*

(1) *Corporal Assistance.*—If parents become poor or are in poverty, children are strictly bound by the natural law to relieve their wants, and to provide for them all necessaries in food, clothing, and dwelling, and this they ought to do out of the same abundance of charity through which their parents nurtured and provided for them in their infancy and childhood. Hence:

(*a*) Sons and daughters are not allowed to enter the religious state if their parents are in extreme or grave necessity, and need their help and support—that is, if they can help them by remaining in the world, and if there is no one else to help or take care of them. And a child having parents in such a necessity would be bound to leave religion in order to support them even after profession, if no other suitable means of helping them can be obtained.[2]

(*b*) Children should visit and console their parents in

[1] See 'Compitum,' *in loco*, pp. 118, 119.
[2] St. Thom., Q. 101-104 ad 4.

their infirmities and in their old age. We find our Saviour sharply reprehending that unnatural doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees which dispensed children from the relief of their parents: *But you say, Whosoever shall say to father or mother, The gift whatsoever proceedeth from me, shall profit thee. And he shall not honour his father or his mother; and you have made void the commandment of God for your tradition.*[1] This tradition of the Pharisees was calculated to enrich themselves by exempting children from giving any further assistance to their parents if they once offered to the temple and the priests that which should have been the support of their parents. This was a violation of the law of God and of nature, which our Saviour condemned.

(2) In *spiritual* matters children should assist their parents in spiritual needs. (i.) If they are ignorant of the truths of faith, they should instruct them with charity and reverence, especially in those things that are necessary to be known and believed by the necessity *of means* and by the necessity *of precept* for salvation. (ii.) They should admonish them with love and reverence when they find that they are in danger of sin, and when they neglect their religious duties, especially by reminding them of, and asking them to avoid, the danger, and to approach the Sacraments. (iii.) They should watch over their spiritual interests, especially in the time of sickness, that they may have the priest and all the spiritual helps of the Church, and receive the last Sacraments when in danger of death. (iv.) After death they should have prayers and Masses offered for their souls, and they should also carry out their last will and testament, and follow accurately all the instructions left by their dying parents.

I may conclude this chapter by briefly remarking that these instructions concerning the duties of piety towards parents apply in due proportion to the duties of piety to be shown to brothers and sisters and other near relatives.

[1] St. Matt. xv. 5, 6.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER III.

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN.

1. The duties of parents towards their children enumerated. Love: its conditions, internal, efficacious, well ordered.
2. The father the head of the family. His duties and position considered and illustrated.
3. The mother of the family. Her duties and influence considered and illustrated.
4. How parents may sin against the duty of love towards their children.
5. The corporal education or bringing up of children. The rights of children as to—(1) Life. (2) Support. (3) Provision for the future. (4) Giving them a trade or calling. (5) Success in life not to be determined here, but hereafter.

PARENTS owe their children: 1. *Love*, *internal*, *external*, and *well ordered*. 2. *Education*, both *corporal* and *spiritual*. The first of these imports *protection* and *provision* as to life, support, and state; the second implies *instruction*, *example*, and *correction*.

To these things parents are bound out of piety, because the obligations of parents and of children are correlative, so that defects and faults in this matter, if sinful, besides the malice common to the sin, are clothed with a special malice against the virtue of piety. Let us treat of these duties in the order in which they are here given, so that we may include all the principal obligations of parents towards their children as far as possible in one chapter.

1. *Love.*—This implies *benevolence*, or to wish them well, so as to exclude all hatred, aversion, rancour, and every deliberate depraved affection; also all predilection, which is exemplified in the history of the patriarch Joseph, and is calculated to beget hatred and enmity amongst the children, and to break up the family into factions. It also implies beneficence—that is, to act towards them always with love and affection, to avert all dangers from them.

Nature itself imposes the duty on parents of love towards their offspring. This love, as I have said, must be internal —that is, it must be the true affection of the heart, which must manifest itself externally in procuring their good as far as possible. It should also be an efficacious love—that is, parents should try never to act coldly or remissly towards their children, or neglect to correct them or draw them away from danger and sin. Their love should be well ordered—that is, to prefer their spiritual to their temporal advantage, and, amongst temporal things, to select for them that which is the most necessary and the most suitable. This love must be on the part of both *father* and *mother*, and in speaking to them as the heads of the family I may remind them of some ideas and traits of character of the Christian family from old Catholic times taken from a work already quoted—namely, 'The Compitum, or the Meeting of the Ways.'[1]

2. *The Father the Head of the Family.*—Most happy and most blessed may the Catholic parent be who knows that a joyful and Divine issue awaits him in the next life, where we are assured the same order of charity will be perpetuated as on earth. As St. Bonaventure says: *Quia cum gloria perficiat naturam quidquid non est imperfectionis in natura manebit in gloria.* (Since glory perfects nature, whatever has no imperfection in nature will remain in glory.) In

[1] Book i., chap. iv.

heaven, therefore, the father will again find his daughter, and the mother her son.

Sabrian reminds parents that the best heritage which God requires them to provide for their children is not gold, but a holy education, not provoking them to wrath, but to bring them up in the discipline and fear of the Lord.

The paternal authority, says a Bishop of Ajaccio, is with us as in the days of the patriarchs; the mother partakes with the father in all the affections of the children. I could never describe the force and extent of the love of family, the union between its members, the paternal, filial and fraternal love, and the bond which unites together even the most distant relations and branches of the same race. Sophocles says: 'He who can govern a house well can govern a state.' To which opinion Cato the Censor would subscribe, who held that there was more merit in being a good husband than a great senator.

'A family,' says the Baron de Prelle, 'is a little kingdom, and the most ancient of all empires. It is composed of four orders under a king, the wife, the children and the servants. But it was a state in which all the subjects had their respective offices and rights, to which the free concurrence of all was required, and which involved the discharge of many duties by him who had the chief authority—duties which could not be transferred to others without attaching shame to all.'[1]

3. We have next to consider the *mother of the family*. The ecclesiastical conjugal law requires of parents, as Hincmar, quoting St. Augustine, says: *In prole ut amante suscipiatur, benigne nutriatur, religiose educetur.* (That the family be lovingly brought up, kindly nourished and religiously educated.) It is from the Christian mother that men may best learn, as the Italian poet says, 'how honour

[1] See pp. 117, 132, 134, 146, of the work and volume cited.

is acquired, how God is loved, how one may combine innocence and joy, and what is the direct road to heaven.'

We have the example of our Blessed Lady. *Death through Eve, life through Mary*, as St. Jerome writes. *Eve injured us by killing, Mary profited us by vivifying*, as St. Augustine says. The Virgin Mary, says St. Irenæus, becomes the advocate of the Virgin Eve. By a virgin came the word that caused death, says Tertullian; by another Virgin the Word that gives life. Such is the origin of this new intellectual guidance supplied by women; for though in one respect there can be no comparison between the simple daughter of the Church and thee, O second Eve! yet it is certain that it was the religious mystery which changed the world in regard to the part which thenceforth women were to discharge. And how great the change! There is a direct guidance by the women of the family, not alone to each virtue which conducts to truth, but also to the practice of love and veneration towards her through whose intercession Christ's first miracle was wrought.

Children should be treated with great love by their parents, especially by the *mother*. This feeling was expressed in the complaint of the young Sicilian shepherd: *My father is stern, my mother is stern.* The Abbot Rupert, meditating upon the case of the prodigal son, gives expression to the reflection: *Si prodigus filius viventem matrem habuisset vel a paterno domo nunquam recessisset, vel forte citius rediisset.* (Had the prodigal son a mother living, he would either never have gone away from his father's house, or he would, perhaps, have returned home sooner.)

St. Paulinus of Aquileia says that there is no honour for age or dignity where the mother does not love the son and daughter, or where the son does not honour his mother

and father, but there all manner of indignation and bitterness abounds.[1]

From these extracts we may learn the Christian spirit and the Christian love which parents should entertain for their children.

4. Against the love of their children parents may sin (1) by having or showing any hatred or dislike of their children, by treating them with dark and angry looks, as it were, in silence and in disdain. (2) By uttering against them opprobrious or contumelious names, by cursing them. (3) By permitting them everything they desire, both good and bad, through an inordinate affection, that they may not afflict their children or make them sad. (4) By favouring one more than another without a just cause, or by treating any of their children with indifference and as strangers. I need not dwell further in this place on the sins of parents against the love which they owe their children, inasmuch as that love is so closely connected with their other duties towards them, duties, namely, of corporal and spiritual education, on which we must speak separately.

5. *Corporal education*, or provision for the temporal good of their children. Under this head two duties are incumbent upon parents, namely, protection and provision; and both of these the law of nature teaches. Children have rights given them by nature, and amongst these the principal are: (1) the right to live, and (2) the right to grow, or the developments of body and soul; and there is a corresponding duty on the part of others, and above all on the part of parents to secure to children these natural rights.

(1) *As to Life.*—Parents therefore are bound to protect their children's lives, and from the first moment of their

[1] See pp. 99, 115, 116, 134, and 144 of the work and volume cited.

conception they are bound not to do anything that may be to the injury of the life, the health, or the natural perfection of their offspring either before or after their birth.

(2) *As to support.*—They are bound to provide them with food and clothing, and all that is necessary for the preservation of their lives in health and strength; and this they are bound to do until the children arrive at such an age as to be able to support themselves. They are bound also to bring them up according to their proper state and position, and to have them taught a trade or business, so as to enable them afterwards to live according to their proper state in life.

The weakness and helplessness of children call for protection, especially at the hands of their parents. They are exposed to so many diseases and dangers in their feeble infancy, and in their growing childhood other and more serious dangers threaten them by reason of their want of caution and experience; and for these reasons alone the care, skill and strength of parents are required to guard their little ones from the many evils, wrongs and injuries that beset their path in early life. In so doing, their office is not only parental, but angelical. *See that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you that their Angels in heaven always see the face of My Father Who is in heaven.*[1]

(3) The duty of parents to provide for their children is described in the following language by a writer of the seventeenth century:

'As parents owe their children protection from incident evils, so likewise they owe them provision of necessaries and conveniences according to the rank and degree in which the Divine Providence hath set them. And this the Scripture often inculcates: *What man is there among you of whom, if his son shall ask bread, will he reach*

[1] St. Matt. xviii. 10.

him a stone? Or if he shall ask him a fish, will he reach him a scorpion?[1]—intimating unto us that we are bound to give our children what is fit for the sustentation of that life which they have received from us. And, indeed, they are our flesh and bone; they are ourselves multiplied. Now, nature teacheth us to cherish and nourish our own flesh, as the Apostle speaketh.[2] Nay, the Apostle hath laid this charge exceeding high: *If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*[3]

'And that because even the infidels and heathens are taught by the light and law of nature to make provision for their own; and this provision is not only for the present, but our care is to extend farther; and according to our ability ('bating the expenses of decency and charity) we are to take care for their future subsistence; and if we cannot leave them a patrimony, we are to leave them an art and calling, whereby through the blessing of God they may procure their own livelihood. So the Apostle says: *For neither ought the children to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*[4]

(4) 'And if we must place them out to a vocation, we must endeavour, with all prudence, to fit it to their genius and inclination; for otherwise it will not be a vocation, but a vexation unto them all their days; still remembering that, if we piously design any unto the work of the Lord, it should be those who are the most pregnant, and whom God hath endowed with the greatest gift for so high a ministration. For it is a sin very like to that of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, to consecrate priests unto the Lord of the refuse and the vilest of the people, and to think those fit enough for the temple who, through the deformity of

[1] St. Matt. vii. 9, 10.
[2] Eph. v. 29.
[3] 1 Tim. v. 8.
[4] 2 Cor. xii. 14.

their body or the defect of their minds, are not fit for a shop or for any other employment.

We must not, however, even through tender affection, train up a family to selfishness, and for the sole purpose of greedy gain, and to look only to their own interests in the world. We sometimes hear families spoken of as model families. 'See how well they have turned out.' 'See how well they are succeeding in life.' There are fathers and mothers by the hundreds who *covet an evil covetousness to their house*, and the world often speaks well of such, for the world will love its own.

(5) Truth or virtue must not be estimated by success, and as man is immortal, being *successful in life* will not be determined here, but hereafter. Let parents be therefore on their guard against devoting their whole lives and energies to the temporal interests of their children, even to the neglect of their own and their children's spiritual good.

'A certain knight,' says the author of the 'Magnum Speculum,' 'who had a wife and many sons and daughters, being on his death-bed, and hearing them lament each other's necessities, summoning all his remaining strength, spoke as follows: "I leave you all great riches and possessions, and I have marked your complaints and observed how you think little about me, who am going to the land in which I feel certain that I have no friend or relation, no riches or possessions; nor do I know where I shall find advice, or where a lodging, but I shall be stript of everything and solitary; and therefore I weep for myself, who ought to have given the half of what I possess to the poor."'

This example suggests other considerations, which may enable parents to discern the wisdom and happy influence of the Catholic doctrine in regard to what they would wish to obtain from their children; for whatever false teachers may have endeavoured to persuade them, they will naturally

desire to be objects of that solicitude after death which, without these doctrines, they can never hope to be. Respect, prayer for the soul, affectionate zeal for whatever is associated with their memory—these are the fruits of the Catholic discipline, and beyond its pale unknown. For when it perishes, the moment the father is in the grave, his last will only avails as far as regards the transmission of property; neither his debts for his sins nor his vows are thought of, and, as Dom Antonio de Gerevara says, 'no one ever afterwards sees so much as a candle lighted at his tomb.'

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*)

CHAPTER IV.

THE DUTIES OF PARENTS TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN (*continued*).

1. Spiritual education: (1) Doctrine, and the particular duties of parents contained under this head. (2) Correction, and the manner in which it should be given. (3) Example, and its necessity.

2. The schools at which Catholic children are to be educated: (1) Propositions condemned by Pius IX. and Leo XIII., and the consequent duty of parents not to send their children to bad schools. (2) Duties of Catholic masters in regard to teaching in such schools. (3) Duties of Catholic inspectors. (4) The case of normal schools considered.

3. These general principles to be applied to all the schools in these countries.

4. Decisions of the Church with regard to the system of education established in Ireland.

5. Letters of the S. Congregation of the Propaganda in reference to the English Universities.

1. *Spiritual Education.*—Parents are principally bound to procure spiritual training and education for their children. The reason of this is evident, because man, besides his material and corporal being which he has in common with other animals, has received from God a rational and immortal soul, created to the image and likeness of God, and destined to tend to God as to his last end. It is therefore the principal duty of parents to instruct and direct him towards that end, and in the means of attaining it. It was

for this reason that Christian marriage was raised to the dignity of a Sacrament by our Blessed Redeemer, namely, that parents might beget children to Christ, and that the parents might receive through it the grace to bring up their children in the fear and love of God.

Three things are required for the proper education of children : (1) *Doctrine ;* (2) *correction ;* (3) *example.*

(1) *Doctrine.*—That is, to instruct them in faith and morals, in the observance of the commandments of God, and in all that is necessary for salvation. Hence it is said : *Teach your children that they meditate on them* (My words or commandments) *when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest on the way, and when thou liest down and riseth up.*[1]

Under this head the following particular duties of parents may be enumerated : 1. To have their children regenerated by the Sacrament of Baptism soon after they are born. 2. To teach them from their tender years their prayers, the Christian doctrine, and how to incline their hearts towards God. 3. To accustom them to their morning and night prayers, to be present at Mass and the offices of the Church, and at catechetical instructions, and to keep them away from the sinful ways, the pleasures and the fallacies of the world, and from all its vain pomps. 4. To place them under good Christian teachers. 5. To watch over them night and day, that they be not led astray by bad companions, or that their minds may not be stained by evil conversations or dangerous reading.

(2) *Correction.*—In the matter of correction parents should remember the admonition of the Wise Man : *He that spareth the rod hateth his son ; but he that loveth him correcteth him betimes.*[2] *Withhold not correction from a child, for if thou strike him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou*

[1] Deut. xi. 19. [2] Prov. xiii. 24.

shalt beat him with the rod and deliver his soul from hell.[1] And St. Paul, to the Ephesians, writes: *And you fathers, provoke not your children to anger: but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord.*[2]

Correction, to be useful, ought to be moderate and prudent, and the old severity of beating is often calculated to do more harm than good. Parents should not beat their grown-up children, and they can scarcely do this without anger and quarrelling on both sides; and even in the case of the younger children correction should not be needless or immoderate. Children nowadays can be better trained without cruel beating, which often has the effect of rendering them morose and pusillanimous, and of begetting, instead of love, contempt, anger and dislike.

(3) *Example.*—Good example teaches and attracts better than words, especially when given by parents and superiors. Words alone will profit little, if not sustained by good example. If Christ our Lord pronounced a *woe* on that person, whoever he may be, that should scandalize one of these little ones, how terrible must be the *anathema* incurred by parents who scandalize their own children.

2. There is one important question in connection with this subject that requires special treatment, that is, the schools at which children are to be educated, and whether it is lawful to send children to non-Catholic and Board schools. On this subject I shall quote from Haine's 'Moral Theology,' as that author summarizes the doctrine, and gives us clearly and accurately the principles which may guide parents and others intrusted with the care of children in this all-important matter.

(1) The syllabus of Pius IX. contains the following proposition as deservedly condemned: *That manner of educating youth can be approved by Catholic men, which is apart*

[1] Prov. xxiii. 13, 14. [2] Eph. vi. 4.

from the Catholic faith and from the power of the Church, and which has regard, or only primarily has regard, to the science of natural things, and the end of earthly social life,[1] *even if it be of itself full of dangers, and very much adverse to Catholicity.*[2] This condemnation was confirmed by Leo XIII. in the Encyclical *Nobilissima*,[3] wherein, amongst other things, the Holy Father pronounces: *It is of the utmost importance that the offspring of a Christian marriage should be carefully educated in the principles of religion, and that those arts in which youth are instructed for the good of mankind should be joined with religious training. To separate one from the other is, in reality, to wish that the youthful minds in the duties towards God be moved neither one way nor the other; which training is false, and, especially in early youth, most pernicious, as it opens the way to atheism and closes it against religion.* Hence, therefore, the same Pontiff adds: *The Church has always openly condemned those schools that are called mixed or neutral, having admonished parents over and over again that in a matter of such moment they should be on their guard.*

This condemnation he renewed in the Encyclical *Quoa multum*, directed to the Bishops of Hungary.[4] Since, therefore, public schools which are called *neutral*, *mixed*, or *lay*, because, under the pretext of freedom of different creeds, they professedly exclude all doctrine of religion, have been condemned by the Church as in themselves and intrinsically bad, it is clear that they are not to be frequented by Catholic children, even though all of them do not involve the same amount of danger.

Hence, in the first place, parents, and those holding the place of parents, cannot be absolved who either (1) permit their children to go to those neutral schools, in which the

[1] N. 58. [2] Inst. S. C. Prop. Fide, November 24, 1875.
[3] February 18, 1884. [4] August 22, 1886

ruin of their souls cannot be avoided—that is, those that are positively bad, as therein things are taught or done which are contrary to Catholic doctrine and to good morals: or (2) who, although a fit and suitable school exists in the place, or they can afford to send their children to be educated in a Catholic manner elsewhere, nevertheless commit or send them to those neutral schools, not, indeed, positively, but negatively bad—that is, in which nothing contrary to faith and morals is taught, *without sufficient cause, and without taking the necessary precautions so as to make the danger or occasion of perversion remote from being proximate:* such parents, I say, if contumacious, cannot be absolved in the tribunal of penance, as is manifest from the Catholic moral doctrine as declared in the above-cited instruction.

(2) Secondly, as to *masters*. It would be wrong to hold the office of teacher in neutral schools that are positively noxious—that is, wherein books contrary to faith and morals are to be read and studied. Generally speaking, it may be otherwise if dangerous or pernicious books are excluded, because the function of master does not imply an approbation of the method adopted in neutral schools, and the religious training is omitted only through necessity. I have said, generally speaking, because we must except the case in which Bishops might prohibit them to teach in such schools. As to the extent of the prohibition, Bishops can in some countries, for the common good, prohibit all neutral schools, or tolerate them only under certain conditions—that is, should they foresee that they would all become positively pernicious in a short time, or that, though not positively injurious to the students, they might be likely to imbue into their minds an irreligious spirit, from the fact that the Bishops may know that these schools were established by their founders in order to overthrow religion.

And a law founded on the presumption of universal danger is obligatory and binding on all; although in a particular case this danger might cease, yet the adequate reason of the law would exist.

(3) Thirdly, it is not lawful for a Catholic to undertake the function of inspector in schools that are positively bad or pernicious, because inspectors by reason of their office would become participators in the evil. If, however, a hope exists that a Catholic inspector might be the means of rendering them less injurious and making them less evil, the duty might be undertaken for the purpose of remedy. It is otherwise with regard to schools that are not positively bad; in this case, provided there be no episcopal prohibition, they may undertake that duty, and it would be praiseworthy to do so with the purpose of excluding dangerous books and teachers from the schools.

(4) Fourthly, in the case of normal schools, in which teachers are prepared for their offices, the same rule may be laid down. Youths cannot go to them if they are positively bad; they can if only negatively so, provided no episcopal prohibition exists to the contrary, and provided they themselves undertake to abstain from all those things from which a Catholic teacher ought to abstain.

3. These general principles may be applied to all the schools in these countries—Elementary schools, Protestant schools, Board schools, Middle Class and Higher Class schools, and the Universities.

4. How the Church has acted in practice with regard to mixed schools, and how her sentiments and the precautions required may be known, we may gather from her decisions on the systems of education established in Ireland, an outline of which I may here give as an illustration of her proceedings.

On January 16, 1841, in a letter addressed to the Metro-

politans of Ireland, to be communicated to their suffragans, it was stated, in conformity with the aforesaid rules, that, as the result of the Irish national system of education in the secondary schools, or in the lower classes—which had been promoted by the English Government for children of every denomination of Christians — seemed not to have been, during the ten years that it had lasted, injurious to the Catholic religion, the Sacred Congregation had thought fit not to give any definite judgment on the subject, but rather to leave this mode of instruction to the prudence and conscience of the Bishops; for the success of the system depended necessarily on the vigilance of the pastors, the use of proper precautions, and the experience which the future should give. But the Sacred Congregation seriously impressed upon the Bishops of Ireland how necessary it was that all books injurious to faith or good morals should be excluded from the schools, and that the Government instructor of the Catholic teachers for the classes of religion, morality, and history should be a Catholic, or else that there should be no instructor at all. The plan, moreover, of giving only secular instruction in the mixed schools was considered safer than that of teaching briefly the so-called fundamental and common articles of the Christian religion, and reserving special instruction for the different sects separately. Finally, the Bishops and parish priests were exhorted to take every means for preventing the contamination of any of the Catholic children by this national system of education, and to use every effort to obtain a better system and more equitable conditions from the Government.

When, in the year 1857, Higher schools were about to be established in the cities of Ireland (the Queen's Colleges) under the exclusive direction of the Council of National Education—a measure (as the Holy See was informed) full of danger, by reason of the Protestant character of the

schools, and of the intention ascribed to the Government of using them for the perversion of Catholics—by a letter of February 20 of the same year the Bishops were exhorted, in the name of the Sacred Congregation, to defend their flocks with anxious zeal, to watch over them with care and diligence proportioned to the danger with which the salvation of souls was threatened by the new system, and by suitable admonitions, sermons, and pastoral letters to preserve the faith from the contagion of error.

5. In regard to the mixed University schools and colleges established by the English Government on the same system for the scientific instruction of youth, the Sacred Congregation, in a letter of October 9, 1847, expressed to the Irish Bishops its fear that such colleges would be dangerous to the Catholic faith and injurious to religion, and it admonished them to have nothing to do with such establishments, and exhorted them rather to improve the condition of the existing Catholic colleges, and to endeavour to erect a Catholic academy. To allay the fears which had arisen, the English Government made some modifications in the statutes of the aforesaid system, but the Sacred Congregation, on a subsequent examination of the question, and considering the great intrinsic dangers of the system, did not deem it right to change its resolution as above given, and this was committed to the Irish Bishops in a letter dated October 11, 1848.

Omitting the letter of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda addressed to the English prelates in reference to the English Universities, August 6, 1867, and that addressed by the same Congregation to His Eminence Cardinal Manning, January 30, 1885, I shall confine myself to an extract taken from the 34th Synod of Westminster, p. 11, which shows the present position of Catholics with regard to education at the Universities in England.

Notwithstanding the former letters received from the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, and an injunction laid by the Bishops upon the clergy, both secular and regular, binding them *sub gravi* not to encourage or to permit Catholics to reside at the national Universities in England for the purpose of education, by a recent decision given by the Holy See, upon the petition of the Bishops, this injunction is now cancelled—that is to say, under certain definite conditions the Church will in future tolerate the frequentation of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge by Catholic youths. It is not the wish of the Bishops that Catholics should be urged to frequent these Universities, or that a public opinion should be formed, and stimulated to lead Catholics in this direction. There is still need of experience and much prudence in dealing with this question of extreme delicacy. The following notice has been published by the Bishops of England to set forth the position :

'In consequence of altered circumstances and of further experience, the Cardinal Archbishop and Bishops, in January last, 1895, drew up certain resolutions in modification of the policy hitherto pursued by the Catholic Church towards the education of Catholics in the National Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. These resolutions were duly submitted to the superior authority of the Holy See. After full examination by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, they were graciously approved on April 2 by the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII. The decision, therefore, of the Church in this matter is in substance as follows : That no kind of approval or toleration can be given to the education of Catholic youths in the National Universities, unless they have previously obtained, during the period of their primary and secondary education, a thorough and exact knowledge of their religion, and are of sufficiently

solid and formed character to fit them for University life; and unless, moreover, they be prepared to avail themselves of such instruction, to be offered them during their University course, as shall equip them with such further suitable and adequate Catholic training and knowledge as may be deemed necessary. A small council has been nominated by the Bishops, consisting of clergy and laity, to provide for these religious educational interests of Catholic undergraduates, without, however, interfering with the ordinary work of the Universities.'[1]

[1] Extract from the 34th Synod of Westminster, p. 11.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*)

CHAPTER V.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF INFERIORS TOWARDS SUPERIORS AND OF SUPERIORS TOWARDS INFERIORS.

1. Other meanings of the word 'parent' or 'father.'
2. The obligations of princes and rulers enumerated.
3. Their obligation to administer justice: (1) Commutative justice. (2) Distributive justice. (3) Vindictive justice.
4. The principal sins to which rulers and princes are subject.
5. The obligations of subjects towards their rulers: (1) Honour. (2) Obedience.
6. Whether, and when, it is lawful to disobey the civil power.
7. Is it lawful to rebel?
8. The duty to pay just imposts and taxes.
9. The duty of voting at Government elections.
10. How the law of elections may bear upon the moral law.
11. The duty of prayer for our rulers and superiors.

1. We have considered the duties of natural parents towards their children, and the duties of children reciprocally towards their parents. There is another rank of fathers, that are either political or social, that we have to consider, as they have a right to command, and subjects are bound to obey and reverence them. These are the *patres patriæ*, the fathers of one's country in the political and public social life, and masters towards servants in the private social life.

I shall not treat in this place of ecclesiastical authority or the obedience due to it, as it belongs more properly to another department of the Christian doctrine—namely, to

the instructions in connection with the Sacrament of Holy Orders; neither will I introduce here the special duties o married people towards each other, as this can be better dealt with when treating of the Sacrament of Matrimony. I shall therefore confine this chapter to (1) the obligations of princes or rulers and their subjects ; (2) the obligations of masters and servants.

2. *The Obligation of Princes or those who rule over the Political and Civil State.*—These are bound to devote themselves to the common good of the people with fidelity, assiduity, and zeal. For this purpose it is their duty (1) to protect the citizens in their lives, their property, their liberty, and their honour ; (2) to sustain the principles of religion, and to punish those who publicly violate those principles ; (3) to assist the citizens in all works of beneficence, such as to aid parents in educating their children without prejudice to parental rights.

3. Princes and rulers are bound to adminster justice to their subjects.

(1) *Commutative Justice*—that is, in preserving equity and what is in accordance with just equality in taxes, contracts, and the like.

(2) *Distributive Justice*—in conferring honours and offices on worthy men ; that is, to appoint men of approved ability and integrity to be in authority under them. As kings cannot be omnipresent nor omniscient, it is necessary that they should hear with other men's ears, and see with other men's eyes, and act with other men's hands, and therefore they ought to make choice of such as are men of known fidelity and wisdom, to commit to them the offices of the State. Be the fountain never so clear, the streams must needs be polluted if they run through filthy channels. Kings therefore should do according to the counsel of Jethro : *And provide out of all the people able men, such as*

fear God, in whom there is truth, and that hate avarice, and appoint of them rulers of thousands, and of hundreds, and of fifties, and of tens.[1]

(3) *Vindictive Justice*—that is, that magistrates administer justice impartially and without corruption; that they maintain the cause of the poor and the oppressed; that they put down by just authority the insolence of their proud oppressors; and punish severely unjust tyranny on the part of their subordinates.

Princes and rulers are also bound to give good example to their subjects, and to employ the power bestowed upon them for the advancement, and not for the detriment, of those under their rule. The Church of Christ very fittingly warns the rulers themselves that the Sovereign Judge will call them to a strict and speedy account, and, evoking the words of Divine wisdom, she addresses them one and all in God's name: *Give ear, you that rule the people, and that please yourselves in multitudes of nations; for power is given you by the Lord, and strength by the Most High, Who will examine your works and search out your thoughts . . . for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. . . . For God will not accept any man's person, neither will He stand in awe of anyone's greatness; for He hath made the little and the great, and He hath equally care of all. But a greater punishment is ready for the more mighty.*[2]

4. *The Principal Sins to which Rulers and Princes are subject.*—(1) Too great and immoderate ambition for ruling and for glory, that may lead to invasion and the unjust retention of another's kingdom or portion of it. (2) To enter upon an unjust war. (3) To neglect the wants of the people, especially the wants of the poor. (4) To impose unjust taxes, and to burden the people with keeping

[1] Exod. xviii. 21.
[2] Wisd. vi. 3 *et seq.* Encyclical Letter of Leo XIII., Dec. 28, 1878.

up an unnecessary army. (5) To make or enforce unjust laws. (6) To appoint unfit men to public offices. (7) To permit depraved customs or practices without necessity, such as scandalous plays and theatrical amusements that are contrary to good morals. (8) To permit indiscriminate liberty of conscience against Christian faith and morality; or, on the contrary, to disturb, or permit to be disturbed, the true religion or its observance.[1]

5. *The Obligations or Duties of Subjects towards their Rulers.*—Subjects owe: (1) Honour towards the Sovereign and his representatives, according to the words of the Apostle: *Fear God, honour the King*,[2] (2) faithful obedience to just laws; (3) the payment of just imposts or taxes; (4) that they should vote according to their conscience in all Government elections, and (5) pray for their rulers.

(1) *Honour.*—The principal reason for giving honour to kings and princes is assigned by St. Paul: *Let every soul be subject to higher powers; for there is no power but from God. . . . Therefore he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God. . . . For he* (the prince) *is God's minister to thee for good*.[3]

Against this honour due to rulers and princes people may sin either by internal contempt or by external signs of contumely. Contempt of a lawful superior, as such, is always sinful; but this has to be distinguished from any contempt that we may have of a man on account of his personal defects and mean qualities: a ruler or king may be of a cruel and tyrannical disposition, and be guilty of acts that might bring any man into just and honest contempt.

External signs of irreverence may be when contempt is manifested externally in the presence of others, by publicly insulting the King or his representative, or his image or

[1] See Lehmkühl (Decal.: præcep. iv.). [2] 1 Pet. ii. 17.
[3] Rom. xiii. 1-4.

statue, by speaking injuriously of him, either by calumny, or detraction, or false and unjust representations.

(2) *Obedience.*—This duty is inculcated by the words of the Apostle already quoted. This duty of obedience to the powers that be is taught us by many ancient Scriptural examples. The family of Jacob, whilst captive in Egypt, obeyed all the orders of Pharao, an idolatrous and wicked king. Amongst the kings who governed the Jewish people, many of them were wicked, very corrupt, and adoring idols; nevertheless, the prophets and those who remained faithful to the law of God obeyed them in all civil matters, and they only refused that obedience when they were commanded to adore false gods. When our Saviour came into the world, Judea was subjected to the Roman Empire, and yet Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem to be enrolled, according to the command of the Emperor Augustus. Afterwards our Lord taught this obedience by word and example, especially on one occasion, when He declared that we should render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. The Apostles Saints Peter and Paul taught the same doctrine to the faithful who lived under the rule of the impious and tyrannical Nero. St. Peter tells the Christians: *Be ye subject therefore to every human creature, for God's sake: whether it be to the king, as excelling; or to governors, as sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of the good.*[1]

There are two important questions to be answered in reference to this obedience: (*a*) Whether, and when, it is lawful to refuse to obey the civil authorities; (*b*) is it ever lawful to rebel?

6 With regard to the first, it is evident, as we have seen in the case of the obedience of children towards their parents, that it is never lawful to obey any human authority

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14.

in things that are contrary to the law of God. Otherwise, civil rulers are to be obeyed, except in a case in which they might command something, though not bad in itself, but yet evidently opposed to the common good. This might happen when they might not attend to distributive justice, or impose a grave and unjust burden on a great portion of the community. I say a great portion, because if only a few or a section of the community is aggrieved, the law is not on that account to be considered unjust, because complete proportion is not always possible, and consequently all are bound to the observance of the law —not only those not aggrieved, but even those unfairly aggrieved by it; at least, by virtue of the natural law which obliges a man sometimes to cede his own right for the public good, or in order to avoid great scandal.

7. In reference to the second question, we have to give the general answer that it is never lawful to rebel *privata auctoritate*—that is, on one's own private authority—and this is true even when the rule of a prince is tyrannical. This is declared by Leo XIII. in his Encyclical *Quod Apostolici muneris*, of December 28, 1878. Should it, however, happen at any time, that in the public exercise of authority rulers act rashly and arbitrarily, the teaching of the Catholic Church does not allow subjects to rise against them without further warranty, lest peace and order become more disturbed, and society run the risk of greater detriment. And when things have come to such a pass as to hold out no further hope, she teaches that a remedy is to be sought in the virtue of Christian patience, and in urgent prayer to God.

By *private authority* is expressly stated, because the commonwealth, having assembled meetings of the inhabitants of a kingdom, may proceed against a tyrant who is too insolent. and have him deposed or put to death, in case

no other remedy can be obtained. The reason of this is that the King receives his power from the State, not for destruction, but for edification and preservation, and it can therefore take away that power from him when he begins to use it to the manifest and evident injury of the State and the people. This is the opinion of St. Thomas, which he illustrated by examples—although there are some theologians who hold the contrary opinion. However, we are reminded that from civil war arise often greater evils than any inflicted by a tyrannical king; and therefore it is often better to bear oppression patiently than rashly to try to free the country from its existing rulers. Hence Leo XIII. adds: 'When things come to such a pass that no other hope of safety is to be found, remedy must be sought in the merits of Christian patience and in constant prayer to God.' Which sentiment was also expressed by St. Thomas: 'If human aid cannot avail against a tyrant, recourse must be had to God, the King of all, Who is our Helper in adversities . . . and that the people may deserve to obtain His aid they should avoid sin, because in punishment of sin God sometimes permits impious men to rule and have power.'[1]

Hence the following proposition is found condemned in the Syllabus: 'It is lawful to withdraw from obedience to, and even to rebel against, lawful rulers.'[2] And the following was justly proscribed as heretical by the Council of Florence: 'Every tyrant can and ought to be lawfully and meritoriously put to death by any of his vassals or subjects—and this even by secret plots or subtle blandishments or flatteries, notwithstanding any oath or confederation made to or with him, and without awaiting a command of any judge whatsoever.'

8. *To pay Just Imposts or Taxes.*—This duty is taught by our Saviour's example in submitting to the imperial

[1] See Haine's 'Theology,' De quarto præcepto. [2] N. 63.

taxations, and ordering St. Peter to pay for Him to the tax-collectors, and even performing a miracle for this purpose. It is also in this sense we have to understand His command, *Render, therefore, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.*[1] And St. Paul taught the faithful the duty of obedience to sovereigns, not alone through fear of punishment, but also as a duty of conscience: *Render, therefore, to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due: custom to whom custom: fear to whom fear: honour to whom honour.*[2] This stands to reason, for how can rulers govern a State, make laws, administer justice, defend their subjects, keep up an army, if every man can dispense himself from contributing to the general expenses? This simple reflection is sufficient for all reasonable men, to make them see the justice and necessity of rates and taxes. The rulers, it is true, ought to make the taxes as just and as reasonable as possible, and if they exceed in this matter they themselves will have to render a severe account to God; but it is not possible for private individuals to decide whether the taxes are just or exorbitant.

I may say that the officers of the Crown are generally supposed to secure all payments in this respect, and that, as a rule, there is never danger of the supplies not being obtained for all the necessities of the State; and that I do not imply that there is sin in all particular cases where limitation may be made to this general law for just and reasonable causes; but I may have to refer once more to this subject when dealing with the obligations imposed by the seventh commandment.

9. *To vote in all Government and other Elections according to the Dictates of Conscience.*—Much depends on this point nowadays, in the government of countries and people, especially in Italy in France, in England, and in all

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 21. [2] Rom. xiii. 7.

countries where representative governments exist. Two things should be mentioned in connection with this duty, namely, to vote, and to vote for the right person.

To go and give one's vote at Government elections appears to be a duty, and to abstain from doing so may be a serious fault. A wise French prelate[1] has said plainly that the habitual omission of electoral duties solely or principally through fear of inconvenience, or not to derange one's business, or not to bring upon one's self personal trouble, is to become culpable, not only before men and in the social order, but before God and in the spiritual and supernatural order; and this fault might become so grave of its own nature as to imperil a man's eternal welfare. Do not say, by way of excuse, 'My vote will not be of much consequence.' Your vote, and it alone, may sometimes change the whole thing. But more than that: by your not going to the ballot you give bad example to your neighbour; he may imitate your abstention, and thus two votes instead of one are lost, and so on: until a good cause may be lost, or grave injury done to the State, as the result of an election, neglected through sloth or indifference on the part of some Catholics.

The second duty is to vote for the proper person. For this purpose it is not necessary to be a great politician. It is sufficient to know that the man for whom you vote is an honest Christian. If it be a municipal election, the candidates are fairly well known to all the inhabitants. In the case of Parliamentary elections, we have different ways of coming to the knowledge of the persons who seek to be our representatives. The newspapers are not in these cases a very safe guide, but often they are the only means of knowing a candidate; and it is a good proof in his favour if he is sustained by good honest papers, as far as such things

[1] Mgr. Panisis, 'Cas. de Conscience.'

exist, and if, on the other hand, he be severely censured and criticised by the infidel and dishonest portion of the press. Another and better way of coming to the knowledge of a worthy candidate is to consult with such friends and neighbours as are beloved and respected, and live up to the principles of their faith. They will not abuse our confidence, as a rule; and those who have no other opportunity of gaining political knowledge have to depend for their action at elections on the advice and direction of others, whose only interest it can be to safeguard the interests of their country, whenever they have to favour one party in the State more than another.

To meet any objections that may be raised against the doctrine here laid down, I may be allowed to quote one or two appropriate extracts from the theological essay of the Rev. E. O'Reilly, S.J., entitled 'The Clergy and the Law of Elections':

10. 'What I contend for is that there may be a conscientious obligation, an obligation under sin, and even under grievous sin, to vote for or against a particular person in certain circumstances, and that the law neither does nor can negative that position. I then proceed to contend that, when such an obligation exists, or is believed and considered to exist, there is no harm in stating it privately or publicly. It seems strange that a priest should not be allowed to tell his people of an obligation of conscience which he believes to exist, and consequently to tell them of a sin which he believes will be committed by the breach of that obligation. Curiously enough, a layman may, I presume, talk as much as he likes about the sin of voting one way or another, but a priest cannot—on the ground, we may suppose, that the people will believe the latter, and not much mind the former. After all, a priest cannot make a thing a sin that is not so already. Another thing certain is,

that, in the eyes of all tolerable Christians, and of many who are not Christians, the position of legislator is one that avails much for good or evil, that bad legislators are a great moral mischief, and that the selection is a moral question. And yet sin, it seems, is not to be spoken of in this connection ; in other words, conscience is not to be spoken of, for where conscience reaches sin reaches. Heaven and hell are to be kept out of view. And I would have it carefully noted that there is no question of excess or abuse. Even if there were, I would demur to interference with what is the proper province of the Church ; but this is not so. With or without moderation guilt is not to be touched on. I ask, is all this thoroughly Christian ?'

Referring to the words of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald at the trial of the Longford election petition in 1870, the same learned author continues : ' Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, speaking of the Catholic priest's legitimate influence, says : *He may . . . . point out the true line of moral duty*, and explain why one candidate should be preferred to another ! Now, I ask what is the *line of moral duty* but the line of moral rectitude as opposed to moral turpitude ? And what is moral turpitude but sin ? Surely moral duty is more than party politics, something more than mere expediency, so far as party politics and expediency are rightly or wrongly supposed to be indifferent to conscience. Moral duty means moral obligation. It has but one true and genuine sense, though its objects are exceedingly various. The duty, for instance, of respecting property is as truly a moral duty, and in the same sense, as that of respecting life, though theft is a less crime than murder. Every real duty has a relation to God, and no real duty is unaccompanied by a Divine sanction of reward and punishment. Those who deny or ignore God and a future retribution may, indeed, admit *some sort* of moral duty, but not in the same

sense as Christians. Either, then, let the *line of moral duty* be struck out, or let *sin* and its consequences be eliminated.'

11. *Prayer.*—Finally, subjects should pray for their Sovereign and the rulers of the State, according to the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles: *I desire, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings: be made by men; for kings, and for all that are in high stations: that we may lead a quiet and a peaceful life in all piety and chastity.*[1] As all the people of a State participate in a public good, they should take an interest in promoting it and in labouring for it. Now, on the other hand, the public good depends, in great measure, on the ability and foresight of those who govern the State: we should therefore pray God to enlighten princes and rulers and legislators in their deliberations, to give them the wisdom and prudence required for the just administration of public affairs, strength and courage to enforce the observance of the law and the maintenance of justice throughout the realm, zeal for the honour and good of religion, and all the other qualities that are required to make and keep a nation prosperous, and to bring happiness, honour and peace to its inhabitants. This is the end and object of the private and public prayers that are offered for kings and rulers, and all that are in high station. Hence, in the Diocese of Westminster and some othe dioceses, the prayers for the Queen are ordered to be said or sung either in Latin or English after the principal Mass, in every public church, on all Sundays.

[1] 1 Tim ii. 1, 2.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER VI.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

1. The state of the question explained.
2. The duties of masters towards their servants: (1) They should treat them with kindness. (2) They should instruct them and watch over their conduct. (3) The duty of good example. (4) The duty of paying just wages.
3. The duties of servants towards their masters: (1) Fidelity. (2) Obedience. (3) Respect and reverence.
4. The duties of teachers towards their pupils.
5. The obligations of scholars towards their teachers or tutors.

1. THE subjection to public authority and to parents arises from the very nature of man, and is necessary. Other relations of superiority and subjection may arise by free election and agreement amongst men. Under this head the chief duties to be explained are those which exist between masters and servants.

Here there is no need to discourse of dominion and servitude, or whether its origin or foundation be in nature or by institution, nor of the difference of servants reduced to that state by war, purchase, or contract; but we have simply to confine ourselves to the existing state of things, and the mutual and reciprocal duties that masters and servants owe to each other.

The inequality of condition is necessary for society, and is founded on reciprocal needs. There is nothing humili

ating in it, for the true dignity of a man is maintained by doing his duty in whatever condition he is placed, in the order of Divine Providence. Following the order which we have so far observed in treating the questions appertaining to this commandment, we have to explain first the duties of masters towards their servants, and secondly the duties of servants towards their masters.

2. *The Duties of Masters towards their Servants.*—Masters ought to treat their servants with kindness, to watch over their instruction and conduct, and to pay them their just wages.

(1) Masters should treat their servants with kindness. This is the advice of the Apostle St. Paul when he says: *Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal: knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.*[1]

The following considerations may show masters the duty of kindness towards their servants. They are their equals according to religion and before God. There is no respect of persons with God. *If*, therefore, in the words of the Wise Man, *thou have a faithful servant, let him be to thee as thy own soul: treat him as a brother; because in the blood of thy soul thou hast gotten him.*[2] Consider also that masters and servants are equal in nature. They are servants, yet they are men and fellow-servants; they are of the same materials and draw the same breath of life, and their condition is accidental, for the same Providence who hath subjected them may change the scene by exalting the servants and bringing the masters into bondage. There is another consideration that should always be kept in mind —namely, those that are the servants of men may be great before God, whereas many masters may be slaves to their passions, and through them to the devil; and hence superiors should not think of despising their servants or

[1] Col. iv. 1. [2] Ecclus. xxxiii. 31.

of treating them severely, but they should deal with them with love as their fellow-creatures, their fellow-servants, and co-heirs of the same inheritance of life and of eternal happiness. These considerations may lead many to take the warning advice of the Wise Man: *Be not as a lion in thy house, terrifying them of thy household, and oppressing them that are under thee.*[1]

(2) Secondly, masters are bound to instruct their servants, and to watch over their conduct. Masters, in a sense, take the place of parents with regard to servants. Sometimes they who have to enter service are orphans; thither many are driven by the need and poverty of parents. Remembering this, masters and mistresses should, as far as possible, replace the parents these have been forced to leave in order to serve them. Under this consideration the obligations of masters are the same as those of parents towards their children, and they should therefore attend to their instructions by good advice, vigilance, good example, and by a lively zeal for their spiritual interests. This obligation especially applies to young domestics who may not have made their first Communion, and to those who are ignorant of their religious duties. Servants should be sent to Mass on Sundays, and the ignorant should attend Catechism and religious instructions. The morning and evening prayers can be recited in common by the whole household, as is customary in many devout Catholic families. Good books and pamphlets might be put into the hands of servants, that they may have the opportunity of useful reading in their spare moments, and on Sundays and holy days.

The masters should watch over the conduct of their servants, that they may not frequent dangerous places of amusement or go with bad companions, and that they may not lead other servants into danger of sin, or be the cause

[1] Ecclus. iv. 35.

of spiritual ruin to the children or any of the inmates of the household. It was a maxim of Constantine the Great when, in clearing his household of all officers without religion, he used to say: 'How can they be faithful to their prince if they are unfaithful to their God?' If domestics are not good Christians, they will not be good servants. They will be light, passionate, vain, tale-bearers, lying and calumniators, and often dishonest. The good of the household, its honour, the innocence of children, are very much dependent on the character of the servants and their conduct. Hence irreligious servants should not be kept in a Christian family unless they can be reformed, and kept in the way of rectitude and of their religious duties; and it is an important obligation on the part of those who are responsible for them to instruct and guide their servants in those things that belong to their spiritual welfare. It is not enough to make temporal provision for their bodies, and to be able to say, 'I fed and clothed them, and was careful of their health,' if their souls be neglected, which, as we know, are incomparably to be preferred before their bodies.

(3) *The Duty of Good Example.*—It is necessary to give servants good example. The example of superiors makes a special impression on their servants either for good or evil, and more easily towards that which is evil than that which is good. If the example of a master is bad, it in a way authorizes the evil conduct of the servants. Masters are observed by all those who are under them, and they should therefore be continually on their guard against saying or doing anything that may scandalize those little ones, or those that are weak and dependent upon them. They should be careful in their conversation, lest they should utter words against religion or morals, or against their neighbour's character, because in a household all is heard, all is remembered and repeated. If domestics hear ridicule

and pleasantries indulged in against God and holy things, and the future states of reward and punishment, they may soon lose the fear of offending God, and imagine they can do wrong with impunity, provided they can escape observation. If they hear their superior take away the good name and character of a neighbour, they will not think much of the name and character of their superiors, and will not scruple to let their views be known. It is, therefore, our own interest to edify those who serve us or are in any way dependent upon us.

With regard to those masters who scandalize their servants by their discourse, their example, and their disorders, and prove to them the occasion of sin, we must in a special manner remind them of the words of our Divine Saviour: *But he that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Wo to the world because of scandals! For it must needs be that scandals come: but nevertheless wo to that man by whom the scandal cometh.*[1]

(4) Masters are bound to pay exactly the just wages of their servants. This is one of the first duties of justice, and the first law of the contract entered into between masters and servants. The wages of servants and labourers should be paid not only entirely, but promptly, so as not to put the poor to grave inconvenience by obliging them to wait a long time for their payment, inasmuch as they and theirs often depend upon their weekly or monthly earnings for food and other necessary things. Thus, in Leviticus it is said: *The wages of him that hath been hired by thee shall not abide with thee until the morning.*[2] This is in accordance with the just law given by Tobias to his son: *If any man hath done any work for thee, immediately pay him his hire,*

[1] St. Matt. xviii. 6, 7. [2] Lev. xix. 13.

and let not the wages of thy hired servant stay with thee at all[1]—an advice which it would be well for all masters to take, and for all fathers to give to their sons.

The sin of defrauding or depriving servants of their wages is so great that in the Scripture it is compared to homicide: *He that taketh away the bread gotten by sweat is like him that killeth his neighbour. He that sheddeth blood and he that defraudeth the labourer of his hire are brothers.*[2]

There are some avaricious masters who delay and keep putting off the payment of servants and labourers until the poor creatures are compelled to make reduction in their wages or just demands, and there are other rich employers who take advantage of the poverty and distress of the people so as to obtain their work and services at a lower price than that which is just and reasonable. These are reminded of the words of St. James: *Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.*[3]

Thus, defrauding servants and labourers of their wages is one of those sins that cry to Heaven for vengeance, and the same Apostle, St. James, tells us the punishment that is invoked upon such unjust tyrants: *Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the last days.*[4]

Not only have they to receive their salary, but the domestics should be properly fed and housed. Servants justly detest a mean and avaricious house. It is to the

[1] Tob. iv. 15.
[2] Ecclus. xxxiv. 26, 27.
[3] St. James v. 4.
[4] *Ibid.* v. 1 *et seq.*

master's interest to supply them with good, healthy, and sufficient nourishment, and it is to his interest also to gain the affection of his servants by generous acts, and to exercise towards them always, not only the duties of justice, but those of charity. Be good masters, and you will have good servants; be Christian masters, and you will receive from your heavenly Master an eternal recompense.

3. *The Duties of Servants towards their Masters.*—The obligations of servants towards their masters are principally three—*fidelity, obedience, and respect.*

(1) *Fidelity.*—They are bound to be faithful, especially in the matter of observing secrecy, and not revealing anything that may be detrimental to their masters or employers or their families. A certain amount of confidence is placed in them as faithful servants, and the violation of a secret that may bring harm to a family would be not only a sin against charity, but in this case a sin also against justice. This includes, also, diligence in the affairs of their masters, and carefulness in all that is committed to their charge, according to the advice: *Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters, in all things pleasing, not gainsaying; not defrauding, but in all things showing good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*[1]

(2) They are bound to obedience, and this by reason of their contracts and by the virtue of justice. St. Paul says: *Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not serving to the eye, as pleasing men, but in simplicity of heart fearing God.*[2] And, again: *Servants, be obedient to them that are your lords according to the flesh.*[3] This obedience should not extend to things that are dishonest or contrary to the laws of God.

(3) A third duty of servants is respect or reverence, and hence pride and insolence of a grave character towards

[1] Titus ii. 9, 10. [2] Col. iii. 22. [3] Eph. vi. 5.

masters would be a serious violation of *observance* in a servant. Grave contempt and contumely become more aggravating in servants, and a new species of malice is introduced into those sins by the fact that they are committed by servants towards their masters. The reverence I here speak of means that their words be respectful, and free from clamours and irreverent mutterings in their presence. They should also speak well of their masters in their absence, that others may have a good opinion of them ; let them conceal their infirmities, and what they cannot speak truly of to their credit, let them keep to themselves in silence. They ought likewise to testify their reverence in their actions by a becoming behaviour, modesty, and respect always in their presence, and being always ready to do not only what they are commanded, but what they know may be pleasing and agreeable to them, according to the expression of the Psalmist : *As the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress*, etc.,[1] which intimates to us that good servants will not only readily obey when they have an express command, but will be ready to take the least sign, the least look, from their masters, and strive not only to fulfil, but even to prevent, their commands by the readiness and respect of their obedience.

As belonging to this commandment, we have at its conclusion to refer to the reciprocal obligations of masters and pupils.

4. *Duties of Teachers towards their Pupils.*—(1) They are bound out of a kind of justice to impart to them sound knowledge.

(2) If they have taken on themselves the care of the education of their pupils, they are bound also, by a species

[1] Ps. cxxii. 2.

of justice, to promote their good moral training and to correct their faults.

(3) If they should violate this special care which they have undertaken, by sins against charity, as, for example, by hatred or scandal, their sin is more grave and different in its kind from the ordinary sins against charity, inasmuch as it involves a special deordination against a species of piety due to their pupils.

5. *The Obligations of Scholars and Pupils towards their Teachers or Tutors.*—In cases where their training and education is committed to teachers and tutors, scholars and pupils owe them: (1) Obedience in all those things in which they are to be subject. (2) Reverence and love, so that their acts against the respect and love due to them are worse than if shown towards an outsider. They should therefore avoid acts of detraction, of contempt and mockery, and the like.

I may conclude this chapter, and the explanation of this whole commandment, by calling attention for the last time to that one special duty imposed by the fourth commandment, and which is common to parents and children, superiors and inferiors, masters and servants—namely, the duty of praying for one another. Parents should pray for their children, and children for their parents. Children are exhorted to say every day some prayers for their parents, that God may preserve their life and health. Masters ought to pray for their servants, and servants for their masters; the King for his subjects, and the subjects for their King; pastors for the faithful committed to their charge; and the faithful should pray for them, that God may always grant them light and grace to guide their flocks in the way of salvation.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

1. The reason of this commandment, and the attention that should be paid to its exposition.
2. The obligations imposed by this commandment.
3. Analysis of the sins forbidden.
4. Analysis of the duties imposed by this commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

1. God has given us this terrestrial life as a time of trial, in order to prepare ourselves for our last end, which is the possession of heaven hereafter. No one but God is the absolute master over life and death, and no one but God can, therefore, fix the time of our duration in our present state of existence. Everyone, therefore, has a right to live and to preserve life, and it is for this reason that the Divine law forbids any attempt on human life as a crime, and this whether it be made on one's self or on another. It is all the more criminal because it is of such a nature as to hasten a soul out of this life without any preparation, and expose it to the danger of eternal loss.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent teaches that the faithful should hear with willing attention the exposition of a commandment, the observance of which must be the security of their own lives. These words, 'Thou shalt not kill,' emphatically forbid the shedding of human blood; and they should be heard by all with the same pleasure, as if God, expressly naming each individual, were to prohibit injury to be offered him under threat of the Divine anger

and the heaviest chastisement of the Divine wrath. As, then, the announcement of this commandment should be heard with pleasure, so should its observance be to us a pleasing duty.

2. The obligations of this commandment, like the others, are twofold—prohibitory and mandatory: the one forbidding to kill; the other commanding us to cherish sentiments of charity, concord and friendship towards our enemies, to have peace with all men, and, finally, to endure with due patience every inconvenience which the unjust aggression of others may inflict.[1]

As the affirmative part of this commandment includes the common duties of charity toward our neighbour, it will not be necessary to treat of them in any special way under this commandment. We have therefore, after the manner of most writers on the fifth commandment, to confine our explanations to its negative part, namely, to those various things that are forbidden by it. And that we may have an outline of the sins forbidden and the duties enjoined by this commandment before our eyes from the beginning, I may arrange it according to the order given in Gill's Church Catechism, with the translation of the Scripture texts taken from the Douay Bible.

3. *Sins Forbidden.—Literally:* Wilful murder of—

(1) One's self (or suicide). Consequently, all acts tending to shorten our life are prohibited under this commandment—for example, gluttony, drunkenness, etc.

(2) Another. *Whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed; for man was made to the image of God.*[2] Certain ways of taking a man's life must, however, be distinguished from murder as not being sinful—thus:

(*a*) The killing of a man by accident, (*b*) in self-defence,

[1] See the Catech. of the Council of Trent, *in loco.* [2] Gen. ix. 6.

(*c*) in lawful war, (*d*) to put a murderer to death to satisfy the ends of justice.

In spirit: (1) To hurt anybody by word (*i.e.*, saying bitter things). *Let all bitterness, and anger, and indignation, and clamour, and blasphemy, be put away from you, with all malice.*[1]

(2) To hurt anybody by deed.

(3) Bearing malice in our hearts: *But now lay you also all away: anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy.*[2] *You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*[3]

(4) Bearing hatred in our hearts: *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.*[4]

We may add to these the *sin of scandal and bad example.* By this the spiritual death of the soul is caused, inasmuch as it is deprived of the grace of God, which is the spiritual life of the soul. We have, therefore, two things to consider under this head—the death of the body, and the spiritual death of the soul which is brought about by leading another into sin.

4. *Duties enjoined.*—(1) Love: *Love your enemies . . . do good to them that hate you.*[5] *If thy enemy be hungry, give him to eat; if he thirst, give him to drink. For doing this thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.*[6] *If God hath so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*[7]

(2) Forgiving disposition: *For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences.*[8]

[1] Eph. iv. 31. [2] Col. iii. 8. [3] St. Matt. v. 21, 22.
[4] 1 St. John iii. 15. [5] St. Matt. v. 44. [6] Rom. xii. 20.
[7] 1 St. John iv. 11. [8] St. Matt. vi. 14.

(3) Praying for one's enemies: Our Lord on the Cross prayed, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*[1] *Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.*[2]

(4) Contributing to the necessities of the poor: *He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall put up his bowels from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him?*[3]

According to this outline, we have to consider in the following chapters our obligations as regards the principal things forbidden by this commandment.

[1] St. Luke xxiii. 34. [2] St. Matt. v. 44.
[3] 1 St. John iii. 17.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER I.

HOMICIDE AND MURDER.

1. Murder: its definition and meaning.
2. Homicide: its definition, and the meaning of the various words used for killing a person.
3. Suicide: its meaning. How regarded by heathen plilosophers.
4. Suicide a terrible sin.
5. Indirect suicide considered as to its lawfulness. Three cases of sin under this head.
6. Causes for which a man may expose his life to danger.
7. Whether mutilation is lawful.
8. The penalties incurred by suicides.

1. I TAKE *murder* here in the English and legal sense of the word, namely, the act of unlawfully killing a human being with premeditated malice by a person of sound mind. To constitute murder in *law*, the person killing another must be of sound mind or in possession of his reason, and the act must be done with malice prepense, aforethought or premeditated; but malice may be implied as well as express.

2. *Homicide* is the general word for killing a person. It is of three kinds—*justifiable*, *excusable*, and *felonious* or *culpable*: *justifiable*, when it proceeds from unavoidable necessity without an intention to kill, and without negligence; *excusable*, when it happens from misadventure or in self-defence; *felonious* or *culpable*, when it proceeds from

malice or is done in the prosecution of some unlawful act or in a sudden passion. Self-murder, or *suicide*, is felonious or culpable homicide. *Homicide* therefore includes *murder* and *manslaughter*. *Manslaughter* differs from murder in not proceeding from malice prepense or deliberate, which is essential to constitute murder. It differs in law also from *excusable* homicide, being done in consequence of some unlawful act, whereas *excusable* homicide happens in consequence of misadventure. We may also explain some other terms that qualify culpable homicide or murder and make the sin more grievous:

Parricide, which means the murder of a parent (or one to whom reverence is due). *Fratricide*, the crime of murdering a brother. The Latin *conjucidium*, which means the crime of murdering a wife or husband. *Regicide*, the killing or murder of a king. *Assassination*, the act of killing or murdering by surprise or secret assault; murder by violence, or for pay.

Homicide may be also *sacrilegious*, by reason of the person who is killed, *e.g.*, a priest or person consecrated to God; or by reason of the place where the murder is committed, *e.g.*, in the church or sanctuary.

3. *Suicide.*—The first species of culpable homicide which we have to consider is *suicide*. This means self-murder, or the act of designedly destroying one's own life. To constitute suicide in the legal sense, the person must be of years of discretion and of sound mind.

By the heathen philosophers, suicide was under certain circumstances surrounded with a halo of glory, and no one was considered to be truly a great man who survived disgrace or misfortune. A Brutus or a Cato, who preferred death to the outliving honour, friends and country, was held up to men's admiration as a hero. Our Saviour taught us what the heathen did not know, that the loftiest heroism

is to suffer and be silent, to take up the Cross and follow Him.

We must not include in this all the heathen teachers, for some amongst them have severely condemned this criminal custom. Of these we may mention Aristotle. That saying in his ethics is worthy of a Christian: 'For a man to die only that he may escape poverty or crosses is not gallantry, but mean cowardice, as he declares that he wants courage to bear them.'

4. Suicide is one of the most terrible sins a man can commit. By it men leave little or no room for repentance, for hope or for charity. As a rule, suicides die in their sins—yea, their death is their sin; and what an awful state must they be in who resolve that their last act in life shall be a most grievous sin! They indeed are self-murderers, for they destroy not only their bodies, but their souls also.

It is, therefore, never lawful for a man on his own authority directly to cause his own death. The precept *Thou shalt not kill* forbids the killing of any man, and much more the murder of one's self. We cannot dispose of what does not belong to us, and over which we have no dominion or right; and God has reserved to Himself the dominion over life and death. Hence, neither to avoid sin nor to avoid a most excruciating death would it be lawful for a man to take poison; neither would it be lawful for soldiers to put themselves to death, rather than fall into the hands of their cruel or savage enemies.

From a Christian point of view, God does not permit anyone to be tempted above his strength, and He never allows sorrows or troubles to be so violent as to cause life to be insupportable. As a general rule, we find men brought to the commital of this crime by 'circumstances involved,' dishonesty in trade, loss of honour among men, or a life of

voluntary debauchery and drunkenness, and the result a jury giving a verdict of 'temporary insanity.' This is not always honest nor charitable, for we must remember that there is a charity which is due to the living no less than to the memory of the dead. There are many true cases of temporary insanity, and it does not appear to be fair or charitable to associate such cases with the wilful suicides; as, for example, it would not be charitable to take such instances as Achitophel, who from wounded pride hanged himself because his advice had not been taken,[1] and Judas Iscariot, who in despair hanged himself,[2] and in our verdict mix them up with such cases as we sometimes hear of, namely, when good Christians have been afflicted with inherited disease, and under the pressure of mental illusions resulting therefrom, or from some other involuntary cause, have committed suicide.

At present there is a tendency to argue that suicide is in itself a proof of madness, for which the sufferer is not responsible; but if you push that argument too far, you must ultimately arrive at a justification of all sin.

5. What has been stated so far is, that no one can lawfully cause his own death *directly;* but there may be question as to indirect suicide, and on this we have the statement: It is not lawful without a just cause to kill one's self indirectly, or to do or omit anything from which it is foreseen that death will follow; but for a just cause this would be lawful.

In explanation of this statement, we may assign, as the general reason for it, that what is not lawful to be done directly cannot be done indirectly without a just cause, and we may draw the following deductions from it as an admitted doctrine amongst moralists.

(1) He sins grievously who, by taking poisonous or

[1] 2 Kings xvii. 23. [2] St. Matt. xxvii. 5.

noxious drugs or by living intemperately, causes his own death, or notably and viciously hastens it.

(2) Gladiators, rope-dancers, and others engaged in dangerous arts, sin if they practise their profession with a certain danger of killing themselves. It is otherwise if they be skilled in their art, because then the danger is not more than remote and ordinary.

(3) They sin who, when suffering from a dangerous malady, refuse to make use of the ordinary means and remedies for restoring health or saving life. No one is bound, in such cases, to extraordinary and unusual means, or to undergo an excruciating and humiliating operation that would bring about a state of miserable existence. Older theologians teach that a man need not submit to the amputation of his members, legs or arms, etc., in order to save his life. However, nowadays these operations are performed with so much skill, and so little pain and suffering, that it would be considered very foolish in anyone not to submit to them when there is strong hope of these being the means of saving life.

6. For a just cause, however, a man may expose his life to danger—thus :

(1) Soldiers, for the public good, may expose themselves to evident danger of death, as, for example, setting fire to a ship and blowing up a fortress, even though it is certain they will themselves perish in the flames, because it would be to the common danger did these things fall into the hands of the enemy.

(2) To avoid a more certain danger of death, one may risk a lesser danger ; thus, it would be lawful to throw one's self or jump from the higher windows of a burning house, in the hopes of saving one's life.

(3) In the exercise of charity a man need not defend himself against an aggressor ; and he can expose his life

to danger to defend the life of a friend, and much more so that of a king, a wife, parents, brothers or sisters.

(4) In the cause of faith martyrs have sacrificed their lives, and some of them did not even fly from martyrdom when they could have done so.

(5) Out of a motive of virtue men may mortify the flesh and bring it into subjection, although in this way, when not directly intended, life may be shortened; but one would not be justified in practising excessive austerities above his strength, with serious injury to his health and life.

(6) For the spiritual good of others it is lawful to risk our temporal lives, and sometimes obligatory, as in the case of priests who are bound to attend the sick and dying in all diseases, no matter how malignant or contagious they may be, and howsoever great the danger may be to their own lives.

7. What we have said of killing one's self, or of occasioning death to one's self either directly or indirectly, applies with due proportion to mutilation. Unless there be necessity, it is always unlawful to mutilate one's self by cutting off or depriving one's self, either by one's own act or the act of another, of a limb or member of the body—say of a leg or arm, or even a finger or toe—because we have not the right of dominion over our bodily members, but only the use of them. I have said that this cannot be done lawfully unless there be necessity for it, and the necessity for mutilation would be the saving of the whole body. St. Thomas teaches that, as a member of the body is only a part of the whole, and is on account of the whole in the same way as the imperfect is for the perfect, any member of the body may be disposed of when this is expedient and necessary for the preservation of the whole. Hence, a man to save his life may submit to operations and mutilations, and loss of members, and it would seem

that taking all existing circumstances into consideration, he ought to submit to such remedies, although I have not sufficient authority for asserting that he is bound to do so under sin, as such remedies are still regarded as extraordinary.

8. *The Penalties incurred by Suicides.*—To show the shame and disgrace that attaches or accompanies this terrible crime, both the ecclesiastical and civil laws have decreed certain penalties to be inflicted on account of it.

The ecclesiastical penalties are :

(1) That all suicides who deliberately cause their own death are to be deprived of ecclesiastical burial, unless before death they show signs of repentance. In a case of doubt as to whether the deed was done deliberately, we must presume on the guilt, unless the contrary appear probable ; as, for example, if the man had been to confession a short time before, if he were given to melancholy, if he were a man of a good virtuous manner of life, we can easily presume that the deed was not voluntary. On the contrary, if the doubt be whether his act was the cause of his death or not, we must give him the benefit of the doubt ; as, for example, if a man is found poisoned, or drowned, or hanged, and there is some doubt as to whether this was his own act or the deed of someone else, we should give the dead man the benefit of the doubt and Christian burial.

(2) Irregularity is the canonical penalty of mutilation, so that a man deprived of any of his members, whether through his own fault or the fault of another, cannot be promoted to Sacred Orders.

'Suicide, by the law of England, is a crime, the legal effect of which is a forfeiture to the Crown of all the personal property which the party had at the time he committed the act by which death was caused, including

debts due to him, but it is not attended with forfeiture of freehold or corruption of blood. In order to vest these chattels in the Crown, the fact of self-murder must be proved by an inquisition.

'In Scots law suicide draws after it the falling of the single escheat, or forfeiture to the Crown of the person's movable estate, and a proof of the self-murder may be brought in an action before the court of session, at the instance of the Queen's donatory, against the executors of the deceased.'[1]

[1] Ogilvie's Imp. Dict.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT (continued).

CHAPTER II.

ON KILLING ANOTHER.

1. It is never lawful to cause directly the death of an innocent person.
2. This is a most heinous offence against the Divine law and against society.
3. The prohibition not to kill extends to all—adults, infants, and even unborn babes.
4. Special care for the preservation of life when children are being born into this world.
5. The punishments to be inflicted for the crime of murder.
6. What is to be thought of capital punishment to be inflicted for murder.
7. Conclusions which follow from the doctrine here taught and proved.
8. The question of indirect killing considered and explained and illustrated.
9. The killing of unjust aggressors—(1) In self-defence. (2) In defence of one's property. (3) In defence of one's virtue. (4) In defence of one's reputation or honour.
10. What may be done in self-defence may be done in defence of another.
11. The death of a malefactor should be by public, and never by private, authority. Lynch law unlawful.

1. I MAY begin with a proposition: It is never lawful directly to kill an innocent person—in other words, it is never lawful voluntarily and unjustly to take away the life of a human being. This is clearly what is forbidden by the words of the commandment, *Thou shalt not kill.*

Some false teachers in the time of St. Augustine pretended that these words should be interpreted as for-

bidding all killing or taking away of life—not only that of men, but also of other animals—and included under the prohibition sheep and cows and fowls, etc., which are killed and served up for our meals. It may be said, in answer to such a view of the subject, that unmercifulness even towards the brute creation, and a cruel tormenting of animals, not to satisfy our occasions and necessities, but our unreasonable passions, may be reducible to a sin of anger or cruelty against the law of God; but to kill at least for our necessities cannot be a sin, inasmuch as God gave man the right to do so in giving him the right of life and death over them, according to the words spoken to Noe and his sons: *And everything that moveth and liveth shall be meat for you: even as the green herbs have I delivered them all to you.*[1] The killing, therefore, forbidden in the text refers only to human beings like ourselves, and on this account the precept is sometimes rendered: *Thou shalt do no murder.*

2. The murdering of another is a most heinous offence against the Divine law and against society.

The two greatest sinners that the Scripture hath set the blackest brand upon were both murderers, Cain and Judas—the one the murderer of his brother, the other the murderer of his Lord and Master, and then of himself.

The man capable of such a crime is under the influence of the most brutal passions, and it is for this reason that our Divine Saviour condemned not only murder itself, but all those passions that lead to it, such as anger, hatred, revenge, and envy. The homicide criminally usurps the rights of God. For it was God Himself who *breathed into man's face the breath of life, and man became a living soul.*[2] And God created him to His own image: *To the image of God He created him.*[3] The homicide also most wickedly violates the rights of his neighbour by depriving him of the first

[1] Gen. ix. 3. [2] *Ibid.* ii. 7. [3] *Ibid.* i. 27.

and greatest of his gifts, that which is most precious and sacred, and whose loss is irreparable. The terrible nature of this crime becomes aggravated by the circumstance that a brother's life is taken generally without warning, without opportunity of repentance, and perhaps without time for a last prayer. There are few who would be willing to give up their lives even though they had been just kneeling in prayer, or after receiving the Sacraments, and how dreadful, therefore, it is to think that a human being is hurried into eternity unprepared and unawares, perhaps in the midst of his pleasures and enjoyments, and it may be in the state of sin and devoid of the grace of God. Murder is also a fearful crime against society. The members of society are linked together in one body, and have mutual rights and duties, and may be said to be mutually dependent upon each other, and therefore it is a crime against that social body to take away the life of one of its members—perchance one of its leading members—a crime which causes the greatest sorrow and does the most serious injury to the survivors when the life that is taken away is that of a father, mother, husband, wife, or child. As Christians we are all brethren, and we can imagine God always saying to the murderer, as He did to Cain: *What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to Me from the earth.*[1]

Wilful murder is one of the sins that cries to heaven for vengeance. Blood is a loud and clamorous cry, and the first that ever was shed was heard as far as from earth to heaven.

3. The prohibition of not killing extends to all human beings—that is, not only to adults, but to infants, and to the children in their mother's womb. A recent writer thus speaks on this subject:

'Every child coming into this world has a right to live.

[1] Gen. iv. 10

God gave the child life, and whoever robs it of life sins against its Creator. So in Christian lands the law extends its protection to the tiniest baby. No one can starve, or hurt, or kill any baby without becoming answerable to the law. But it was not always so. Among the heathen in olden times parents were at perfect liberty to kill their children, if they did not want the trouble of rearing them. Among the ancient Greeks there was only one State in which parents were not allowed to destroy their children, and that was Thebes; there, when they did not care to rear the new-born babe, they took it to the magistrate, who sold it by auction to the highest bidder. In Sparta parents took the children they did not desire to be burdened with to a horrible chasm in the earth, and flung the poor little creatures down into it. Generally they put their babes in earthen pots, and left them exposed by the roadside or in fields to die of starvation.

'It was the same among the Romans. Fathers killed their babes, and no one took them to task for it. Indeed, one historian (Tacitus) says that it was a wonderful thing that the Jews and the Germans considered it a crime with them not to rear all their children; and the Emperor Augustus, in whose reign Christ was born, actually ordered his own grandchild to be exposed to death when it was born. An early Christian writer (Tertullian) wrote about this custom, thus addressing the Roman people: "How many are there among you, and they, too, of the magistrates, who put an end to your children? You deprive them of the breath of life in water, or you suffer them to die of cold or hunger, or to be eaten by dogs."'

4. To call special attention to one of the most critical moments of human life, when it is necessary to make use of every precaution and means to save and preserve it—I refer to our coming into this world at our birth—I may use, even

for the purpose of Christian instruction, the example of the midwives in Egypt.

Egypt in ancient times possessed a guild of midwives, to one portion of which was assigned the duty of ministering to the necessities of the Hebrew women in their confinements. Pharao issued secret orders to the two chief midwives, and through them to the others, that when they performed their office they should take care to destroy all the male children, and only suffer the female children to live. Although infanticide was a common practice among many ancient nations, in Egypt it was accounted a crime; and although the Pharao was reckoned a sort of divine being by his subjects, yet it was not felt that he could dispense with the laws of moral obligation. The midwives feared God more than they feared the King, and, though professing a willingness to carry out his will, practically disobeyed his orders. The male children were spared by them; *and God dealt well with the midwives: and the people grew exceedingly strong.*[1]

From this, all other midwives and doctors may be reminded that human life is to be saved at any cost, and, as it is exposed to special dangers on our coming into this world, greater care is demanded on the part of those whose duty it is to minister to women on such occasions.

Since the introduction of Christianity, this moral law is more fully explained, and its principles are carried out by civil laws in Christian lands. Life is now held sacred even from the moment of our existence. No one may rob us of it. Life is protected by the laws of God and men, by the just penalties to be inflicted on those who are guilty of this fearful crime.

5. *The Punishments for Murder.*—Murder often brings with it its own punishment. By some wonderful method of

[1] Exod i. 17-20.

God's providence, it usually is detected and brought to punishment; and it dogs the consciences of those guilty of it with horrid affrights and terrors, so as to extort from them a confession of their guilt, when no other proof or evidence could be found.

Death is the penalty for the crime of murder. It was the punishment appointed by God Himself, according to the command which He gave to Noe: *Whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed, for man was made to the image of God.*[1] This commandment was not first given to the Jews, but to Noe. And it was unrepealed and carried out under the Mosaic law, according to the following words of the Book of Numbers: *You shall not take money of him that is guilty of blood, but he shall die forthwith. . . . Defile not the land of your habitation, which is stained with the blood of the innocent: neither can it be otherwise expiated, but by his blood that hath shed the blood of another.*[2]

The man who had committed wilful murder—that is, killed another from hatred, revenge, with premeditation and lying in wait—was to be dragged, not only from the 'city of refuge,' but 'from the altar of the Lord,' and put to death forthwith.

6. I am not called upon here to discuss the question whether or no the crime of murder is prevented by capital punishment more than by some other punishment, or whether, in all conceivable conditions of human society, the infliction of death for murder is expedient; but I would emphasize the fact that it is certain it was expedient and necessary in the condition of the Jewish people when the Mosaic institutions were established, and that in all nations, no matter how far advanced in civilization and morality, this vindication of the sanctity of human life has been retained.

[1] Gen. ix. 6. [2] Num. xxxv. 31, 33.

According to our laws, every person convicted of murder, or of being accessory thereto, is punishable with death. Rescuing or attempting to rescue a murderer, subjects to penal servitude for life, or not less than fifteen years, or to imprisonment for not exceeding three years, with or without hard labour or solitary confinement. It is also stated that persons who shall conspire, confederate, or agree to murder any person, whether he be a subject of his Majesty or not, and whether or not he be within the King's dominions; and whoever shall solicit, encourage, or persuade, or propose to any person to murder another, whether a subject or not, is liable to penal servitude for not above ten years nor less than three years, or to imprisonment not exceeding two years, with or without hard labour.

7. Although a base attempt to kill is generally only a misdemeanour, yet an attempt to kill by certain means is felonious. Thus, to give or cause to be given poison or other destructive thing to any person, or by any means to cause an injury dangerous to life, with intent to commit murder, may be punished by penal servitude for life.[1]

It is, therefore, never lawful to put to death an innocent person, by causing it directly either by private or public authority. Such an act would be injurious to God, who alone has supreme dominion over human life, and therefore it is intrinsically bad and a grave sin *ex toto genere suo*—of its own entire nature. It is also expressly forbidden by God: *The innocent and just person thou shalt not put to death.*[2] From this we may give the following conclusions:

(1) It is not lawful to kill a man who is mortally wounded, or in any other way in mortal suffering, in order to put him out of pain, because we must not do evil that good may come.

(2) It is not lawful to kill an innocent person in order to

[1] 'Cabinet Lawyer': 'Murder.' [2] Exod. xxiii. 7.

satisfy a tyrant, who may ask for his death under threat of destroying a whole city and its inhabitants, even if the man should consent to his own death, because he cannot, properly speaking, consent to the giving away of his life, which does not belong to him. It is, however, more probable that under such circumstances he should deliver himself up to the tyrant, for the public and common good, and it is probable that he might be handed over to the tyrant should he be unwilling to deliver himself.[1]

(3) It is not lawful to kill legates or hostages, even though the enemy that sent them may not have kept faith, or may have put to death the legates and hostages sent to them, because such legates and hostages are innocent men.

8. The prohibition to kill the innocent does not extend to indirect killing and *præter intentionem*, which is sometimes permitted for a just cause; as, for example, the besiegers of an enemy's camp may continue their attack, even though innocent women and children, who may be in their way, may happen to be shot down and killed.

Speaking of *indirect* or *incidental* killing, the Rev. J. Rickaby, S.J., gives us the common moral teaching on the subject, and illustrates it by an apt example: 'A man is killed indirectly or incidentally when he perishes in consequence of certain means employed towards a certain end, without his death being willed by the employer of those means, or in any way serving that agent, to the furtherance of the end that he has in view. If a visitor to a quarry were standing on a piece of rock, which a quarryman had occasion to blast, and the man fixed the train regardless of the visitor, the latter would be incidentally killed' (and in this case the quarryman would be guilty of murder). 'Now, incidental killing, even of the innocent, is not under all circumstances unlawful; where the end in view is in the

[1] St. Alphon., 393.

highest degree important, the means may be taken thereto, provided always that such an issue as the shedding of innocent blood be not itself the means decerned and elected as furthering the end; for no end, however urgent, can justify the employment of an evil means. Suppose, in the instance just given, the quarryman saw that, unless that piece of rock where the visitor stood were blown up instantly, a catastrophe would happen elsewhere, which would be the death of many men, and there was no time to warn the visitor to clear off, who could blame him if he applied the explosive? The means of averting the catastrophe would be, not that visitor's death, but the blowing up of the rock. The presence or absence of the visitor, his death or escape, is all one to the end intended; it has no bearing thereon at all.'[1]

We have now to examine the particular cases in which a man may lawfully kill another to save his own life or the life of an innocent person; or for the sake of virtue, of temporal property, or for honour and reputation.

9. *The Killing of an Unjust Aggressor of our Life.*—(1) If a man kill another in self-defence, having used every precaution consistent with his own safety to avoid the infliction of death, he evidently does not violate this commandment. The reason of this is assigned to the principle admitted by all: *Vim vi repellere, omnes leges et omnia jura permittunt* (All laws and all rights permit us to repel force by force). It is also clearly proved from the natural law. According to this law, a man has a right to preserve his life, and he can therefore use all the legitimate means necessary for this end. But to kill an unjust aggressor may sometimes be the only means of preserving one's own life, and by killing the aggressor no law is violated, for the man who freely and wickedly endangers the life of another loses the

[1] 'Moral Philosophy,' *in loco*: 'Killing, Direct and Indirect.'

right to his own. We must, however, observe in our defence what theologians call, *moderamen inculpatæ tutelæ*—that is, that nothing should be done against the life of another except in so far as it is necessary for the preservation of our own, because what necessity does not excuse in this case is unjust.

What has been stated applies even to the case when the aggressor may be drunk or mad: In this case as in any other case, if it is possible to wound or disable him, we should do so, and not proceed to take away his life unless there be no other means of safety.

By way of advice, it is stated that if the person attacked is certain that the aggressor is in mortal sin, a very likely thing, and that he will probably repent after the drunkenness passes away, and on the other hand he is morally certain of being in a state of grace himself, then through charity he may give his temporal life to save his enemy from eternal death. There is a great deal of uncertainty as to this result, and it is better for a man in such a case to follow the promptings of nature and attend to the present by saving his own life.

(2) *The Unjust Aggressor of our Money or Property.*—It is disputed whether it is lawful to protect temporal goods of value by causing the death of the thief or the unjust aggressor. Some eminent theologians deny that it is, such as Dens and Carriere. St. Alphonsus, however, considers the opposite opinion the most probable. The reason for this opinion is that the precept of charity does not oblige us to prefer the goods of our neighbour of a higher order than our own, except when our neighbour is in extreme necessity; but not when he, of his own free will, exposes himself to the danger of death and can get away from it if he likes. And independently of this motive, the first opinion attributed to Dens and Carriere, if known, would be calculated to encourage thieves and burglars, convinced as they would

be, that they might proceed to the house of good Christians without incurring danger to their lives. As a rule, however, thieves and burglars may be punished, and the goods saved, other means than by taking away their lives.

(3) *The Defence of Chastity.*—The question in connection with this is whether a woman would be justified in taking the life of an aggressor rather than suffer violence to her virtue or chastity? There are two opinions on this question: one opinion is to the effect that she could not kill the aggressor, as his life is of more value than her virtue; and she need not consent to the sin. St. Alphonsus holds the contrary opinion to this. She can kill him if no other means of escape can be found. Her virtue and chastity are more valuable than riches or property, and, as we have seen, a man may preserve these under certain circumstances by causing the death of the unjust aggressor; so with much greater reason can a woman cause the death of the aggressor rather than be subjected to the indignity and the violence here mentioned. Besides, such an aggressor exposes his own life freely, and he can save himself if he likes to do so, because if time permits he should be warned of his danger; and if this does not avail, and no other means of rescue is at hand, the woman may save herself by shooting him, and serve him right!

(4) *The Unjust Aggressor of one's Reputation or Honour.*—It is not lawful to kill one who attacks our reputation and honour. If the injury be already done, either by word or deed, it is not lawful to take revenge on the man, because that cannot be said to be a means of self-defence. If a man offer insult by word only, this would not justify the insulted man in causing his death, because killing the aggressor in this case could not be said to be a means of saving his honour or reputation. If a man offer insult by deeds, *e.g.*, to pull one's hair or beard, to spit at or on a

person, such an insult may be repelled by deed (*cum moderamine, inculpatæ tutelæ*); and if the enemy should then have recourse to a more violent attack, or have recourse to arms, then it is lawful to oppose *arms to arms* (*licitum erit armis arma opponere*). A proposition was condemned by Alexander VII. which said that it would be lawful to kill a false accuser, false witness, and even a judge about to pronounce an unjust sentence, if an innocent person cannot otherwise avoid the injury or loss resulting therefrom. And Innocent XI. condemned a proposition which said that it is lawful for a man of honour to kill an aggressor who endeavours to spread a calumny abroad about him, if otherwise the calumny cannot be prevented; and which also stated that the same may be said in a case where a man strikes another a slap or blow with the fists, and then tries to escape before he is punished.

10. What I have so far said on behalf of self-defence against an unjust aggressor applies to the defence of our neighbour under like circumstances. In every case in which it is lawful to defend our own life, or virtue, or property, by causing the death of the aggressor, the same may be done for our neighbour or for any other innocent person—that is, we may kill an unjust aggressor in defence of any innocent person in every case in which it would be lawful for us to kill him in our own defence.

11. *Putting to Death a Malefactor.*—I have already referred to the punishment to be inflicted for murder, and I may here add that there are also other offences for which a man may be put to death, such as high treason; and I may therefore state the common teaching, that it is sometimes lawful to put to death a malefactor by public authority, but never by private authority. The reason of the first part of the proposition may be understood from the practice of every legislature, and from the universal consent of men.

Moreover, God, the Author of society, has conferred on it the power and the means necessary for its self-preservation and for promoting the common good, and amongst these means the death of a malefactor is often most necessary.

The reason of the second part of the proposition is that such a power in the hands of a private individual would be not only to the danger, but to the utter destruction, of the peace of society, and the security of our lives would be imperilled.

From this it follows that it is not lawful for a policeman or other guardian of the public peace to kill a malefactor who may be effecting his escape by running away, and this is the case even though the man may be already condemned to death, because no man can put even a malefactor to death unless he is authorized to do so by special command of the proper public authority. So that when we hear of policemen or such-like officials shooting down malefactors who either resist them or fly from them, or firing on a mob, we must understand that this cannot be lawful unless it be done in self-defence or in defence of the innocent, and by special mandate from the proper authority. Without any of these reasons, to fire rashly on an excited mob, to the death of some of our fellow-creatures, is murderous in the true sense of the word.

We may also understand that what is called lynch law is altogether unlawful. The power of punishing malefactors belongs only to the public and legitimate authority, and not to private citizens, and no one should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

Kenrick says, in his 'Moral Theology,' that they sin most grievously who, setting aside authority, usurp to themselves the supreme power of life and death, without any form, or with only a sham form, of judgment.[1]

[1] Tract 3, No. 142; and Tract 8, No. 165.

CHAPTER III.

ON DUELLING AND WAR.

Duelling:

1. What is meant by a duel.
2. A duel on private authority is never lawful; it may be on public authority under certain conditions.
3. Propositions on this subject condemned by Benedict XIV., and the excommunication attached to this crime in the Constitutions of Pius IX.
4. Two points in regard to duelling decided by the Congregation of the Inquisition (anno 1884).
5. The use of this detestable practice in former times.
6. Duelling: how regarded according to the English law.
7. Duelling not required by the necessities of honour.

War:

1. The meaning of the word 'war' and its divisions.
2. War under certain conditions is lawful.
3. Three conditions are required for its lawfulness: (1) Sovereign authority. (2) A just cause. (3) Right intention on the part of those engaged in battle.
4. Some of the just causes of war enumerated.
5. Three canons or rules for guidance in war.
6. Whether soldiers can fight—(1) when the justice of the war is doubtful—(2) when the war is manifestly unjust.

DUELLING.

1. BY a *duel* is meant a dangerous combat between two persons with deadly weapons, having entered into a compact as to the time and place of meeting and the weapons to be used. It is a single combat, a premeditated combat between two persons for the purpose of deciding some

private difference or quarrel. A sudden fight, not premeditated, is called a *rencounter*. A duel is fought with deadly weapons, and in some instances—rare, we trust—with a purpose to take life, which is murder of the very worst kind.

2. A duel undertaken on *private authority* is never lawful; it is against the natural law, as God has never given to man dominion either over his own life or the life of another, except in the cases of self-defence already referred to; it is against the law of the Church. The Council of Trent calls duelling a detestable practice introduced by the devil.[1] It is against the civil law in these countries. 'If one man kill another in a deliberate duel under provocation of charges against his character, however grievous, it is murder in him and in his second, and also in the second of the deceased, and the bare incitement to fight, though under such provocation, is a high misdemeanour.'[2] I have said on *private authority*, because if by public authority a duel should be undertaken for the common good, as, for example, to put an end to a war, it would be lawful in the same sense as war itself.[3]

It is not lawful to undertake to fight a duel with the understanding that when one is wounded, or after a certain number of blows or thrusts, the combat is to be considered at an end, for Clement VIII. has prohibited even duels that are not fatal.

3. The following propositions anent duelling have been condemned by Benedict XIV.:[4]

(1) A military man who, unless he challenges or accepts a duel, would be reputed a coward, a timid and abject man, and one unfit for military duty, and on that account would either be deprived of the position by which he supports himself and his family or lose all hope of ever being pro-

[1] Sess. XXV., Can. 19. [2] 'Cabinet Lawyer,' p. 729.
[3] St. Alph., No. 399, 400. [4] Anno 1752, in Constitut. *Detestabilem*.

moted to a higher grade, to which he would otherwise be entitled—such a man, it is said, would incur neither the guilt nor the penalty were he to offer or accept a duel.

(2) Those can be excused who accept a duel for the sake of sustaining their honour or avoiding human disgrace, or who provoke to a duel when they certainly know that the fight will not take place, as it will be impeded by others.

(3) A general or military officer does not incur the ecclesiastical penalties against duelling who accepts a duel through grave fear of losing his fame or position.

(4) It is lawful in man's natural state to accept and offer a duel to preserve one's property with honour when no other remedy can be used to prevent its loss.

(5) The license asserted for the natural state can be applied to the state of a city badly governed, in which, either through the negligence or malice of the governing body, justice is openly denied.

In the Constitution of Pius IX., *Apostolicæ Sedis* (anno 1870), those taking part in a duel are excommunicated. The excommunication affects those perpetrating the duel, those who provoke it, and those who accept it. It also affects the accomplices, the seconds, and those who encourage and witness it out of design or by set purpose. Accidental spectators and passers-by are not included as affected by the censure.

4. The following two points were decided by the Sacred Congregation of the Inquisition on May 31, 1884:

(1) A medical doctor cannot, if asked by the combatants, assist at a duel with the intention or purpose of putting an end to the fight more speedily, or simply for the purpose of binding or treating the wounds, and he will incur the excommunication by doing so.

(2) A medical doctor or a confessor cannot, without being considered present at the duel, be stationed in a

neighbouring house or a convenient place by compact, ready to offer his ministrations in case of need, and in such a case the excommunication would apply to him.

5. How this detestable practice was used in former days to the ruin of individuals and the detriment of society is shown by Carriere, in his tract on Justice.[1] In the year 1617 it was computed that in eighteen years four thousand noblemen were killed in duels. During the time of the minority of Louis XIV. more than three hundred members of the best families perished in the same manner. And a writer called Theophilus Raynandus[2] says that, of those who before the age of thirty have perished in France up to his day in this brutal manner, a most numerous army might be formed both to repel external foes, to strengthen the kingdom, and that would be capable of doing great things for the common good.

6 In these countries, and according to the English law, as I have already said, one who kills another in a duel is held guilty of murder, and both he and his seconds are liable to be put to death. And even if murder be not actually committed, and neither of the combatants be wounded, the crime is regarded as that of attempted homicide, and is severely punished. If one should wound the other with intent to kill him, he is guilty of felony, and, when convicted guilty of this, he must undergo penal servitude for life, or at least for three years, or he will be imprisoned for two years either with or without hard labour.

And even if no wound be inflicted, one firing at another with the intention of killing him, or attempting to do so, will be held guilty of felony, and be liable to the penalties already mentioned. And, again, one who in any way attempts to kill another is held to be guilty of the crime of felony.

[1] No. 810. [2] 'De Virtutibus et Vitiis.

Nowadays military or army men know that they are liable to the same penalties as other citizens in this matter, and for such a crime they are certain to be deprived of their military position and office. And if a military officer should be killed in a duel, his widow and children are deprived of the usual pension that would otherwise be paid to them. By these means the infamous practice of duelling has been entirely stopped, and such a thing is seldom heard of as happening in these countries.

One word from a modern writer about the answer sometimes made in defence of duelling: It is required by the *necessities of honour*.

By the necessities of honour! 'If *honour* cannot defend itself without such barbarities, is it worth defending at all? A Christian moralist once proposed to institute a "court of honour," with a power of awarding the submissions and acknowledgments sought for by the duel. Such a court might have done very well in those days of conventionalism when the highest thing that could be said of a Christian was that he was a gentleman; when religion itself was to a "man of honour" only tolerable when it was not "vulgar," and the most abandoned profligacy was considered to be no crime so long as it was *correct*. If the choice lay between the two, I would say, let us rather have the duel than these morals of a master of the ceremonies.'

War.

1. The word is the Saxon *wær*, from *guerre*, and in its primitive sense it means to strive, struggle, or to turn or twist. It now signifies a contest between nations or states, carried on by force, either for defence, or for revenging insults, or for redressing wrongs; for the extension of commerce or acquisition of territory, or for obtaining and establishing the superiority and dominion of one over the

other. The objects are accomplished by the slaughter or capture of troops, and the capture and destruction of ships, towns, and property. Among uncivilized nations war is often waged and carried on for plunder. As war is the contest of nations or states, it always implies that such contest must be authorized by the monarch or sovereign power of the nation. When war is commenced by attacking a nation in peace, it is called an *offensive* war, and such attack is *aggressive;* when war is undertaken to repel invasion or the attacks of an enemy, it is called *defensive*, and a *defensive* war is always considered as *justifiable*. When war arises between different portions or members of the same nation, or between the established Government of a nation and a portion of the people resisting it, it is called a *civil* war. Many of the wars that have desolated nations and deluged the earth with blood have been unjustifiable. Happy would it be for mankind if the spirit of *war*, and if the ambition to be great, might yield to the ambition to be good.

After this explanation of its meaning and its division, we have to consider it in its moral bearing.

2. *War*, not only when it is *defensive*, but also when it is *offensive*, is lawful, if it be accompanied with the due and requisite conditions. This may be proved from the fact that it is not opposed to any law, human or Divine. It is not opposed to the natural law, because (1) sometimes no other means can be applied to resist the violence of an unjust aggressor, or to retain the rights of a people or a nation, except by war; and (2) the peace and security of the commonwealth is the end of *war*.

It is not against the law of nations. On the contrary, war seems to have been established by the law of nations; as it is found mixed up with the history and manners of all people and all nations, and, in the words of Livy: *Jus-*

gentium ita comparatum est, ut arma armis propulsentur. (By the law of nations it is established that arms be resisted by arms.) It is not opposed to the Divine law, because in the Old Testament God sometimes commanded the Israelites to make war; and in the New Testament it is nowhere forbidden.

St. Augustine says: 'If the Christian discipline or teaching were to condemn war altogether, this counsel of salvation would have been given to those asking it in the Gospel, that they should lay down their arms and withdraw themselves from military service; but it was rather said to them: *Do injury to no man, and be content with your pay.* Christ, Who ordered the soldiers to be content with their pay, did not prohibit them to serve in the army; therefore we may conclude that war under certain circumstances is lawful, and that it is not always sinful to go to war.'

3. That a war may be just or justifiable, three things are required:

(1) The authority of the monarch or the sovereign power in the country, by whose command war is to be proclaimed. To the King or Supreme Ruler the care of the commonwealth is committed, and it therefore belongs to him to protect the commonwealth from all external foes.

(2) *A just cause*—that the nation or State attacked be attacked for some grave fault and some sufficient and just reason, for which it would deserve to be punished.

(3) *The right intention of those engaged in battle*—that either they may be promoting good or remedying some evil. It might happen that we could have the proper authority proclaiming the war and a just cause for it, and yet it might be an unlawful war through a bad motive and intention, according to the sentiments of St. Augustine, who said: 'The desire of doing harm, the cruelty of revenge, an implacable and relentless state of mind, the fierceness of

rebelling, the unlawful desire of domineering or mastery—these and such like are the things to be justly blamed and condemned in connection with war.'

4. The following are assigned as some of the just causes of war:

(1) The recovery of a territory or of rights due to a prince or to the State.

(2) The punishment of a grave injury inflicted upon or offered to legates.

(3) The sedition of subjects, or rebellion

(4) Assistance given by another nation to rebels.

(5) Violation of a covenant or treaty.

(6) An unjust denial or refusal of an innocuous transit.

(7) A just defence or assistance of an allied nation or State, and other like conditions.

The enlarging or extending of an empire or dominion, or the desire of glory, is not a just cause of war.

5. Three canons or rules for guidance in war are given by an author called Victoria O.P., who lived in the middle of the sixteenth century.

Canon 1.—In the supposition that a king has authority to wage war, first of all, he ought not to seek occasions or causes for provoking war, but as far as possible to keep *peace with all men*, according to the advice of St. Paul to the Romans.[1] He should remember that all are neighbours, whom we are bound to love as ourselves, and that we have all one common Master and Lord, before Whose tribunal we are bound to render an account; but he should only when forced by absolute necessity come to declare war or enter upon such a responsible and terrible duty.

Canon 2.—When war, for just cause and through necessity, is undertaken, he should carry it on, not for the ruin of the nation against which he fights, but for securing the rights of

[1] Rom. xii. 18.

his own nation, and for the defence of his country and his people, and in order to obtain their peace and security.

Canon 3.—Having gained the victory, and the war being over, he should deal moderately and with Christian charity towards the conquered, and consider himself as a judge between two Republics or States, the one which is injured and the other which has inflicted the injury, and he should not act like an avenger or an accuser, but as a judge bound to preserve the just rights of both parties. I may hold that a war cannot be *materially* just on both sides, for right belongs to one or the other ; it can be formally just on both sides, through the invincible ignorance or good faith of the party in the wrong.

An academic question is usually proposed by moralists in connection with wars, which I may here notice, namely :

6. Whether soldiers can fight (1) when the justice of the war is doubtful, or (2) when the war is manifestly unjust.

If the soldier is a subject of the belligerent power, and already enlisted, he is bound to fight, even when he may be in doubt as to the justice of the war. He must presume that the proper authorities have sufficiently considered and attended to this matter. If he be an alien or one who intends to join the army, and rumours are afloat and probabilities exist as to the injustice of the war, he ought to make diligent inquiry as far as he is capable of understanding matters, and settle his doubt, before rashly joining an army that is about to inflict grave and unjust injuries upon others.

In case that a war is manifestly unjust, none, either subjects or aliens, can take part in it without becoming unjust co-operators or accomplices. As long, however, as a soldier cannot escape from the army without grave danger to himself, he is excused from fault ; but he ought to abstain, as far as possible, from inflicting unjust injury

upon others, and try to maintain only a defensive attitude, if such a thing can be supposed to be possible, and to confine himself to actions and duties that are in themselves indifferent.

I may conclude this chapter in the words of St. Augustine: 'They who make just wars, and those public persons who, according to the laws, put malefactors to death, do not break the commandment which says: *Thou shalt not kill;* for as the sword is not guilty of murder, so neither is the man that is the minister of the judge, nor the judge who is the minister of God.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE SINS OF THE HEART AND TONGUE WHICH ARE FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT.

1. Anger: the derivation and meaning of the word.
2. When anger is sinful.
3. When it is a grave sin.
4. Envy: the meaning of this vice.
5. The sadness that is not wrong, and the sadness that is, illustrated.
6. The nature of the sin of envy.
7. The five sins that are born of envy.
8. Hatred: its twofold kind.
9. The hatred that is sinful.
10. The word 'hate' as used in English.
11. Sins of the tongue: those forbidden by this commandment—contrariety, contention in words, to which may be added fighting by deed.
12. When contention or controversy is unlawful, and when lawful.
13. Quarrelling that leads to fighting, when lawful and when unlawful.
14. Concluding remarks on the value of human life.

THE sins of the heart forbidden by this commandment are—anger, envy, and hatred; and the sins of the tongue are—disputes, contentions, and injurious words. That an explanation of this commandment may include all that it is necessary for the generality of Christians to know concerning its obligations, I shall devote this chapter to the consideration of the nature and malice of these vices and sins, taking them one by one in their proper order. The above-named vices and sins come under this commandment, because not only the preparation for murder and the actual imbruing

our hands in the blood of another is prohibited, but likewise all causes and occasions leading to it. These are in the heart.

1. *Anger.*—The word is derived from *ango*, to choke or vex. It is a strong but passing feeling of resentment or displeasure against those whom we believe to have done us an injury; or it may be defined, a violent motion of the heart against such persons or things as displease us. It may be further described as a violent passion of the mind, excited by a real or supposed injury, usually accompanied with a propensity to take vengeance, or to obtain satisfaction from the offending party. This passion, however, varies in degrees of violence, and in the fair-minded may be attended only with a desire to reprove or chide the offender. Anger is also excited by an injury offered to a relation, friend, or party to whom one is attached; and some degrees of it may be excited by cruelty, injustice, or oppression offered to those with whom one has no immediate connection, or even to the community of which one is a member. Nor is it unusual to see something of this passion roused by gross absurdities in others, especially in controversy or discussion. Anger may be inflamed till it rises to a rage and a temporary delirium. Anger is not necessarily in itself sinful. We are told by the Apostle: *Be angry, and sin not.*[1] It may be through a holy zeal. It may be just, and is so when the feeling is moderate, for a just cause, and when the desire of punishment is proportioned to the offence.

2. It is sinful in its mode when it is *excessive*—that is, when the indignation grows into a hot passion that blinds our reason, and like a whirlwind sweeps us away with it, and when its motives are allowed to pass the bounds of moderation, so as to break forth into extravagant, insulting,

[1] Eph. iv. 26.

and false words or violent acts. It is sinful in *its object*—that is, when it seeks vengeance on a person for a wrong he has not really done, or in excess of his deserts; or when it goes about to avenge a wrong by illicit means, as by slander, by bringing hurt upon the person who has given the offence in a secret, underhand way; when it pursues the offender remorselessly, even though he deserves punishment. God says: *Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.* We must seek only the redress of the wrong, not the injury of the wrong-doer.

It is sinful when it is *unjust* and *lasting*. We must, therefore, not allow our eyes to be blinded by passion so as to judge wrongfully. We are very liable to mistake, and may suppose a thing to be done against us intentionally, when it has been done accidentally. We should also be mindful of the advice of St. Paul, *Let not the sun go down upon your anger*,[1] if we bear anger and malice. Anger must be soon over, ready to die out at once when the opportunity presents itself for forgiveness.

3. Anger, when it is unjust and vengeful, is of its own nature a grave sin; but when it is only against inanimate things, as when a man would fly into a rage with the instrument he is using, or break the pen with which he is writing, in a passion, the sin is only venial of its own nature, unless by accident it should cause the man to break out into curses and blasphemy.

A person prone to the sin of anger should consider the meekness of Christ, *Who, when He was reviled, did not revile; when He suffered, He threatened not*,[2] and Who prayed for His executioners. He should remember how often he has given cause that God should be angry with himself, and also that the evils which follow from anger injure chiefly the angry man himself.

4. *Envy.*—This vice means a sadness or repining at the

[1] Eph. iv. 26. [2] 1 St. Pet. ii. 23.

worldly or spiritual good of our neighbour, or a rejoicing at his injury or distress. According to St. Thomas, it is a sadness at our neighbour's good as it is apprehended as detracting from our own. as if a man should grow sad because another becomes equal to him in honour and riches, imagining that by this he is the loser. If a man is sad at his neighbour's prosperity through any other motive but these, it is not envy. Envy may be more fully described—to feel uneasiness, mortification, or discontent at the sight of superior excellence, reputation, or happiness enjoyed by another; to repine at another's prosperity; to fret or grieve one's self at the real or supposed superiority of another, and to hate him on that account.

It may be more fully described as a sadness which affects the mind on the contemplation of advantage accruing to a fellow-being, and which we resent as though what was his good was our ill; or else it is a gladness which we feel when we see or hear of some disadvantage happening to a fellow-being; or, again, it may be a dissatisfaction at his having some natural gifts or Divine favours accorded to him which we are without, or a satisfaction at his having certain natural defects, faults, or infirmities.

5. Hence, (1) to be sad at the advantages bestowed upon persons who are unworthy of them and who do not deserve them is not envy, but *indignation*—and a most just indignation if it be because God's honour or the good of others may be compromised by such persons being entrusted with power and position. *Indignation* would, of course, be bad if it were on account of the favours bestowed by God upon unworthy sinners.

(2) To be sad because from the good of another harm may come to ourselves is not envy, but a *fear of evil*—such as being sad because our enemy becomes favoured in such a way that he can do injury to us and to others, and

may do; such sadness is not because of the good of our neighbour, but on account of harm he may do to us. At the same time, as we cannot see the hearts and measure the understandings of others, it is possible we may undervalue them, and that they may do better than we thought probable.

(3) To be sad at our neighbour's good, not because it is good to him, but because we have not the same good ourselves, is not envy, but *emulation*, and emulation is not sin, according to the advice of St. Paul: *Be zealous for the better gifts; and I show unto you yet a more excellent way*.[1] Thus, without any evil mind towards a person, I can lawfully be sad that he got an appointment or office which I desired to obtain. Students of any art or science, when they see the progress of others, may be sad on account of their own defects, by which they may be incited to greater efforts. An artisan, seeing his neighbour keeping his family by successful industry, may be sad that he is unable to prosper in the same way. A merchant or inn-keeper, seeing numerous customers and dealers frequent the shop or hotel of his neighbour, may be sad, not that it is to his neighbour's benefit, but that it is to his own detriment and loss of profit.

6. Envy is of its own nature a mortal sin, because it is directly opposed to the love of our neighbour. It is often only venial by reason of the imperfection of the act or the small importance of the matter. It is the worst kind of envy and the greatest sin of this kind when it is sadness at the spiritual and supernatural gifts of another, such as to envy another grace, virtues, holiness of life, because we imagine it lessens our own value and is a reproach to us. This is the sin against the Holy Ghost, known as *envy at another's spiritual good*, or the envy opposed to fraternal charity.[2]

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 31. [2] Hlaine, Tract. 'De Peccatis.'

Envy is that gall of the heart which is the reverse of charity; envy is bred of self-esteem, and it hates to see others better, happier, more esteemed, more prosperous than self; it is *selfish egoism*, desiring to possess all advantages itself; it is a *baseness of the soul*, which cannot endure to see anything superior to its own mean self; it is a *falsity of judgment*, for it interprets as wrong everything done by the person it envies; it is *hypocritical*, for it knows the despicable quality of its emotions, and veils them under all kinds of disguises; it is the most distressing of spiritual maladies; it is to the soul what rust is to iron, canker to a tree, corroding and destroying all happiness, brightness, amiability; it poisons the whole life.

7. It is, moreover, the fruitful mother of many sins. St. Thomas mentions five as resulting from it: (1) Hatred, by which evil is wished to the person who is envied; (2) tale-bearing and back-biting, by which his friendship with others is destroyed; (3) detraction, by which his character is injured; (4) joy at his misfortune; (5) affliction at his prosperity—this is a continual pain to the person afflicted by envy. As remedies against this vice, we should remember: (1) that, more than others, it makes a man like the evil spirit, according to the words of Wisdom: *By the envy of the devil death came into the world, and they follow him that are of his side*;[1] (2) that we should disregard human honour, according to the words of the Apostle: *Let us not be made desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*[2]

8. *Hatred of our Neighbour.*—Hatred is twofold: (1) that of enmity, by which we wish evil to our neighbour; and (2) that of abomination, by which we abhor the person or quality of a neighbour. Hatred may spring from offences or injuries done by a fellow-man, or from envy or jealousy,

[1] Wisd. ii. 24, 25. [2] Gal. v. 26.

in which case it is usually accompanied with malevolence and malignity.

Hatred, when it is an aversion to evil, is good, as the hatred of vice or meanness.

9. The hatred of enmity is of its own kind or nature a grievous sin. From its greater deordination, it is worse than external acts done to the injury of our neighbour, but as to the real injury inflicted on a neighbour, external sins do more harm than internal hatred.

10. As used in English, *to hate* is not understood in its strict theological sense. It means to dislike greatly, to have an aversion to; it expresses even less than *abhor*, *detest*, and *abominate*, unless pronounced with peculiar emphasis.

Sins of the Tongue.—To the sins of the *heart*, we may add those of the *tongue*, which are specially forbidden by this commandment.

11. All discord is forbidden by this commandment, and discord implies *contrariety* in the heart or in the will, *contention* in words, and *fighting* in deed or action.

12. Contention means strife in words or an angry controversy. If it attacks the truth pertaining to faith, morals, or justice, and in an excessive manner, contention is a mortal sin. If it attacks falsehood in defence of the truth with moderation, and without excessive passion, it is just and praiseworthy. To attack even falsehood with bitterness and inordinate passion would amount to a venial sin. Christian people should be ready to yield to one another where principle or religious truth is not abandoned by yielding; and if they are constrained to differ from one another in opinion, then they ought to differ without quarrelling, remembering the words of the kind old man who said to his brethren in a season of heated controversy: 'Let us agree as far as we can, and when we cannot agree, in God's name let us agree to differ.'

13. Contention and quarrelling lead to beating and fighting. He who attacks another violently in this way becomes guilty of a grave sin, and to inflict an injury on our neighbour even with our hands is grievously sinful.

The man who defends himself from an attack of this kind with due moderation does not sin, nor can the quarrel be called a fight, as far as he is concerned. But if with the desire of revenge, and with excessive violence, he defends himself, he becomes guilty of sin more or less, according to his state of mind and passion, and the unnecessary injuries which he causes to his neighbour; and it would be certainly mortal should he with a fixed intention turn on his adversary with the intention of killing him or of seriously wounding him. Many sins spring out of a malicious heart, and many are the fruits of an evil tongue, and amongst these we may number fighting and quarrelling, and therefore, in order to keep a guard over our tongue, we should remember the words of the Apostle St. James: *So the tongue also is indeed a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how small a fire what a great wood it kindleth. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is placed among our members, which defileth the whole body, and inflameth the wheel of our nativity, being set on fire by hell. . . . The tongue no man can tame, an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison.*[1]

Having considered the sins forbidden by this commandment against human life, and the love and reverence due to our fellow-beings, we may conclude with a reflection on the dignity of man and of human life.

14. 'Man is not alone in the world,' says the eminent Balmes, 'nor is he born to live alone. Besides, what is he in himself? He is a part of the great scheme of the universe. Besides the destiny which belongs to him in the vast plan

[1] St. James iii. 5 *et seq.*

of creation, he is raised by the bounty of his Maker to another sphere above all earthly thoughts. Good philosophy requires that we forget nothing of all this. The feeling of the dignity of man is deeply engraven in the heart of modern society. We find everywhere written in striking characters this truth, that man, by virtue of his title of man, is worthy of respect and of consideration; hence it is that all schools of modern times, that have foolishly undertaken to exalt the individual at the imminent risk of producing fearful perturbations in society, have adopted, as the constant theme of their instructions, this dignity and nobility of man. They thus distinguish themselves in the most decided manner from the democrats of antiquity; the latter acted in a narrow sphere, without departing from a certain order of things, without looking beyond the limits of their own country. In the spirit of modern democrats, on the contrary, we find a tendency to embrace all branches—an ardent propagandism which embraces the whole world. They never invoke mean ideas. Man, his reason and his imprescriptible rights, are their perpetual theme. This exaggeration of ideas, the pretext and motive of so many crimes, shows us a valuable fact—viz., the immense progress which Christianity has given to ideas in relation to the dignity of our nature. The Christian religion, as the enemy of all that is criminal, cannot consent to see society overturned under the pretence of defending and raising the dignity of man. On the other hand, as history loudly proclaims, all our knowledge and feeling of what is true, just, and reasonable with regard to human dignity, human life, and human honour, is due to the Christian religion, according to Catholic doctrine and teaching.'[1]

[1] Balmes' 'European Civilization.'

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER V.

ON SCANDAL.

1 Scandal: its definition and division.
2. Those who are guilty of active or malicious scandal.
3. The nature of this sin.
4. The gravity of this sin proved from various considerations.
5. The scandal of the weak: when it is occasioned.
6. Whether, in order to avoid this scandal, we should (1) sacrifice some spiritual good, or (2) some temporal advantage.
7. In indifferent things we should avoid giving scandal to the weak.
8. Pharisaical scandal explained.
9. How we are to act with regard to pharisaical scandal.
10. Three important questions: (1) Whether it is lawful to persuade a man determined on a great evil to do a lesser one. (2) Whether it is lawful to permit the occasion of sin in order to correct the sinner. Whether, in confessing a sin of scandal, it is necessary to say if one has been the tempter or solicitor.
11. The positive side of this commandment.

1. THERE is another species of murder forbidden by the fifth commandment, and that men will have to answer for before the tribunal of Christ—that is, the scandalizing or killing of soul by leading another into sin. This crime is called scandal, which is the murder of the soul; and as the soul can be murdered only by sin, scandal may be defined as any wrong word or action which may be the occasion of the spiritual ruin of another. It includes any word or action which is either evil in itself or has the

appearance of evil, and on that account may be the occasion of our neighbour's falling into sin.

The Division of Scandal.—Scandal may be divided, first, into *active* and *passive*. *Active* is that which we have defined on the part of the person who scandalizes, giving the occasion of ruin; *passive* as it is applied to the person who is scandalized, or who suffers the spiritual ruin from the words or deeds of another. Secondly, *passive* scandal is divided into *given* and *received*. Scandal *given* arises really from the word or action of another; that which is only *received* does not really arise from the word or act of another, but is either pharisaical, when it arises from the pure malice of the sinner, or that of the weak, when it proceeds from his weakness or ignorance.

From this division, we may understand that sometimes scandal may be at the same time both *active* and *passive*: sometimes it may be active without being passive, and thus it is said that scandal does not affect the perfect; and sometimes it may be passive without being active, as in the case of pharisaical scandal. Scandal may be given by anyone who does or says a wrong thing before others. Scandal may also be said to be in a certain sense given, by doing that which is not in itself wrong, but which is liable to be misinterpreted, and thereby to shock and offend ignorant or weak consciences. Some call this scandal received or taken, rather than really given. The scandal that certainly is not given is the pharisaical—that is, the sort of scandal to which the Pharisees were addicted.

2. The scandal that is active and really given is called 'malicious scandal,' and Bishop Hay enumerates those who are guilty of this scandal as follows: '(1) Those who give bad example to persons under them; parents who commit any sin before their children; masters who act similarly with their servants; and servants who speak and act wrongly

in the presence of the children of the family. (2) Those who, by alluring words, indecent dress or carriage, entice others to sin, teach them evil they knew not before, or engage them in dangerous amusements and conversation, which is the great means by which impurity, drunkenness, and gambling are promoted. (3) Those who ridicule and laugh at others on account of their piety and virtue. This is a lamentable evil, and one of the chief instruments the devil makes use of to advance the reign of impiety and wickedness. (4) Those who counsel others to what is bad and contrary to duty. (5) Those who provoke others to anger and cursing by insulting language, or to impurity by immodest discourse, songs, books, or actions. (6) Those who encourage others in evil by praise and flattery. Thus, some encourage children and servants to steal from their parents and masters, and then praise them as good-natured, kind-hearted, and charitable, etc.'

3. Such scandal, whether it be direct or indirect, is a special sin against charity; for, as St. Alphonsus argues, if charity obliges us to correct our neighbour, and to impede his lapse into sin, how much more does it oblige us to abstain from leading him into sin by counsel or example!

Active scandal, that is, direct, and intended to make another commit a sin—say a sin of drunkenness—besides being against charity, is also a special sin against the virtue which our neighbour is induced to violate.

As to whether indirect scandal is also a special sin against the virtue violated by our neighbour is doubtful. St. Alphonsus affirms that it is, and assigns as a reason that every virtue not only prohibits acts contrary to it, but that no occasion be given that will lead others into its violation. Others deny that this is the case, as De Lugo, because, as he says, virtues do not oblige—at least, not gravely—that we impede in others the vices opposed to them, but only that

we do not positively intend to lead our neighbour to violate them; otherwise a man who, by his example, would teach another to steal, would be bound to make restitution for the other man's thefts, which no one admits. It is sufficient, therefore, in confession to express generally the sin of scandal, and it is not necessary to mention the special sin of scandal that others were led indirectly to commit; much less is it necessary to express the circumstances that are superadded to sin committed in that way. It is, however, necessary to tell the number of those scandalized; and this in practice ought to be done even when it happens that many are scandalized by one act, although there is a contrary opinion to this, which is said to be probable.

4. The next question we have to examine is the question of the sin of active scandal. It is a mortal sin of its own nature, which is well proved by Bishop Hay from the following considerations: '(1) It is a murder of their neighbour's soul, which is so much more grievous before God, as the soul is more precious than the body, and as the death of the soul is more dreadful than that of the body. Now, if the murder of the body cries to heaven for vengeance, what must the murder of the soul do? (2) In those who do it intentionally it is a most grievous sin, because it generally arises from malignant envy. Thus, the Holy Scripture puts these words into the mouth of these unhappy sinners: *Let us lie in wait for the just, because he is not for our turn, and he is contrary to our doings, and upbraideth us with transgressions of the law, and divulgeth against us the sins of our way of life. . . . He is become a censurer of our thoughts; he is grievous unto us even to behold, for his life is not like other men's, and his ways are very different*, etc.[1] See here the language of the heart, the secret springs of their conduct. The piety of the just man

[1] Wisd. ii. 12 *et seq.*

condemns their negligence, his virtue their vices, his devotion their irreligion; this galls them to the heart, this excites their envy, and makes them fall upon every hellish device to make the just man as bad as themselves. (3) It is a diabolical vice, and shows those who are guilty of it to be instruments and agents of the devil, for *by the envy of the devil death came into the world, and they follow him who are of his side*,[1] which is the conclusion the Scriptures draw in that chapter wherein the springs of their conduct are related as above. Nay, Christ Himself declares them to be the children of the devil: *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you will do; he was a murderer from the beginning*.[2] And of what was he a murderer but of souls? (4) It is the highest injury done to Jesus Christ, because it robs Him of those souls for which He shed His precious Blood; it defeats, as far as possible, the end for which Christ came into the world; it is an open espousing of the interests of Satan in opposition to God. (5) The most dreadful woes are pronounced by Christ Himself against those who are guilty of it: *Wo to the world because of scandals, for it must needs be that scandals come; but, nevertheless, wo to that man by whom the scandal cometh.*[3] *He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea.*[4] Hear, again, how pathetically He addresses them in the persons of the Pharisees: *Wo to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for you yourselves do not enter in, and those that are going in, you suffer not to enter.*[5] It is true the effects of this woe do not always come upon them visibly in this world; but see what will be their fate on the great day:

[1] Wisd. ii. 24. [2] St. John viii. 44. [3] St. Matt. xviii. 7.
[4] *Ibid.* xviii. 6. [5] *Ibid.* xxiii. 13.

The Son of man shall send His Angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.[1]

5. *The Scandal of the Weak.*—This happens when one has no design of drawing others into sin, and does nothing in itself sinful, but does what has the appearance of evil, which weak brethren—that is, the ignorant and ill-instructed—seeing are scandalized, and take occasion of sin. Thus if a person, for just reasons, has permission to eat flesh meat in Lent, an ignorant person seeing it, and not knowing the cause, says, If this person eats flesh meat, why may not I? and upon this follows the example he sees without cause or permission, and so sins.

6. Concerning this kind of scandal, it is asked (1) whether spiritual goods, and (2) whether temporal goods, have to be omitted or neglected in order to avoid giving scandal to weak brethren?

As to spiritual goods, we must hold that those that are necessary for salvation, or those that cannot be omitted without sin, can never be omitted because others would take scandal therefrom. Spiritual goods, that are not necessary but of counsel, need not be omitted or deferred if some spiritual utility, either public or private, is to be thereby lost or sacrificed. If acts of virtue can, without any loss, be hidden or postponed for a time, it may be advisable to avoid giving scandal to the weak; but, generally speaking, the reason why we do these things can be explained to them, and they can be told that there is no sin in the matter, and then, if they choose to take scandal, it can only be attributed to their own malice or wrong-headedness.

As a general rule, we need not omit temporal advantages

[1] St. Matt. xiii. 41, 42.

because the weak may be scandalized, especially if the temporal things be of great moment. Thus, we need not pay more than his fare to a cab-driver, for the reason that he will curse and swear if we do not give him more. This would be a light matter in itself, but the evil might grow to a great extent, and cabmen, as well as others, would thereby be incited to cursing and swearing.

7. In indifferent things we ought to avoid giving scandal to the weak. Bishop Hay says: 'When one foresees that weak persons will probably be scandalized at his doing anything which has the appearance of evil, though really lawful in itself, and be induced by seeing it to commit sin and injure their souls, in this case both the love of God and the love of his neighbour oblige him either to abstain from doing what would have such bad effects, or to take such precautions, where it can be done, as will prevent them. And, indeed, we are commanded to *refrain from all appearance of evil*,[1] and *to provide good things not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of men*.[2] St. Paul is particularly clear on this point. *Judge this rather*, he says, *that you put not a stumbling-block or a scandal in your brother's way. . . . for if because of thy meat thy brother be grieved, thou walkest not now according to charity. Destroy not him with meat for whom Christ died. . . . Keep the things that are of edification one towards another. Destroy not the work of God for meat. All things indeed are clean; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good not to eat flesh, and not to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended, or scandalized, or made weak*.[3]

Again, writing to the Corinthians, he says: *Take heed lest perhaps this your liberty become a stumbling-block to the weak. For if a man see him that hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not his conscience, being weak,*

[1] 1 Thess. v. 22. [2] Rom. xii. 17. [3] *Ibid.* xiv. 13 *et seq.*

be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died? Now when you sin thus against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Wherefore if meat (that is, if my eating meat) *scandalize my brother, I will never eat meat, lest I should scandalize my brother.*[1] And that this was his constant practice on all occasions appears from what follows: *Be without offence to the Jews, and to the Gentiles, and to the Church of God; as I also in all things please all men, not seeeking that which is profitable to myself, but to many, that they may be saved.*[2] In like manner, our Saviour Himself, when the tax-gatherers came to demand the tax from Him, though He was not obliged to pay, yet wrought a miracle to provide wherewith to pay it, and gave this reason, *that we may not scandalize them.*[3] How different is the example of Christ and St. Paul from that of many Christians, who, seeing their weak brother scandalized at what they do, cry out, 'What do I care? I am doing no evil; let him look to it'![4]

8. *Pharisaical Scandal.*—This is the scandal that arises from the malicious and evil disposition of one's own heart. It is taken even from the good which others do, putting the worst construction upon it, and, after the manner of a Pharisee, the man who entertains this kind of scandal in his own mind turns the virtues of his neighbour into vices. It is called pharisaical because the Pharisees took this malicious scandal at Christ Himself, and all those follow their example who envy others whom they see more devout than themselves.

9. As to how we are to act with regard to pharisaical scandal, we may be guided according to the works which we

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 9 *et seq.* [2] *Ibid.* x. 32, 33. [3] St. Matt. xvii. 26.
[4] Bishop Hay's 'Devout Christian,' *ut supra.*

have to do Indifferent acts may be omitted in order to avoid pharisaical scandal, if this does not cause us any great inconvenience. Good works, regularly speaking, should not be omitted on account of this kind of scandal, because in such a case the malice of others might always impede the good which we are inclined to do. Works that are of obligation should never be omitted on account of this kind of scandal. 'We must persevere in good, and never be hindered from our duty on that account, as Christ teaches us by His own example; for when His disciples told Him the Pharisees were scandalized at some truth He had said, He answered thus: *Let them alone, they are blind, and leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit.*[1]

10. Two or three other questions are usually connected with this subject, and they are practical ones and deserving of attention.

(1) Whether it is lawful to persuade a man, who is determined on a great evil, to do a lesser one if no other remedy can be used at the time to prevent him? Some say that this cannot be done, as it means persuading a man to do evil. Others distinguish, and say that it may be done when both evils are of the same species, such as persuading a man to wound another rather than to kill him, which certainly appears to be right when no other means can be adopted to save the life of the doomed man. Others, again, say, with St. Alphonsus, that this can, generally speaking, be done when there is question of the same person; but that it would not be right to persuade a person, who is going to inflict a grave personal injury on one man, to inflict a lesser evil on another instead; and others, again, say that it is lawful always to persuade a man to do a lesser evil in order to prevent him doing a greater, it being, of course, under-

[1] St. Matt. xv. 14, apud Hay.

stood that he is determined on doing the greater evil, and that there is no other means of preventing it. I think the opinion of St. Alphonsus is the more probable, and the safer to be followed in such a case.

(2) It is asked when is it lawful to permit the occasion of sin in order to correct a sinner? All agree that this is lawful. It is not leading another into sin, and there is sufficient reason for permitting the occasion. Thus, parents and masters are not bound to remove the occasion of thefts from servants and children who are given to stealing, that they may be found out in the fault and be the better corrected and amended; in like manner, keepers and watchmen may hide in order to catch thieves and the like, that they may bring them to punishment. There is also a probable opinion, founded on the authority of St. Thomas, which says that it is lawful even to place the occasion of sin for a good end, as, for example, to leave purposely the key of the safe, in which money is locked, in the way of servants to test their honesty and fidelity when one has reason to doubt them.

(3) Finally, there is a question as to whether, in the case of giving scandal or leading another into sin, it is necessary to declare in confession whether one has acted as the tempter, or has merely given consent to the sin with an accomplice. In such a case both are guilty, and, according to the more probable opinion, it is sufficient to confess the sin, and the circumstance of having been the solicitor need not be mentioned.

11. In concluding this chapter and our instructions on this commandment, let us remember that it has a positive side, that we are each our brother's keeper, that we are therefore bound, not only to take heed lest we destroy souls for whom Christ died, but also to do all we can to assist souls to obtain life everlasting. And if we in earnest

set about the good work of winning men to Christ, Who is their Life, oh, how great shall our reward be at last! And not only so, but in and for itself alone, what work so God-like, what joy so true, as *to convert the sinner from the error of his way and save a soul from death*?[1]

Neither let us forget that, even in the things which pertain to this life only, this commandment, when understood from the positive side, instructs us to seek our neighbour's well-being. Even as Christ has left us an example, so we also should *go about doing good*, healing the sick and comforting the mourners. Most men may afford some time for these good offices, and those who cannot afford time can, at least, give of their money to enable others to work. There are hospitals and asylums and parochial charities on all sides, claiming their alms and their sympathies, and this law of God, and Christ's example, bidding them save men's lives.

Let us pray that God may preserve us from the charges which in this life press heavily on those who violate this commandment, and from the severe chastisements which await them in the next life. Let us, therefore, avoid all quarrels, all hatred; let us pardon those who offend us, and sacrifice everything for peace and the love of God; and in this way we may hope to keep this commandment in all its perfection.

[1] St. James v. 20.

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. 1. What is the sixth commandment?

A. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*[1]

Q. 2. What is the ninth commandment?

A. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's . . . wife.*[2]

Now, it is proper to treat of these two together, because they both relate to the same object and have the same end.

Q. 3. What is the principal design or end of the sixth and ninth commandments?

A. To direct us in our duty in regard to sensual pleasures.

Q. 4. What are the vices chiefly forbidden by these commandments?

A. Lust and intemperance, whether the intemperance be in eating or drinking.

Q. 5. What are the virtues chiefly enjoined by them?

A. Chastity and temperance.

In this short catechetical form we have the order to be followed in the instructions on these commandments. We shall first consider the vices forbidden by these commandments, and afterwards the virtues enjoined by them.

[1] Exod. xx. 14. [2] *Ibid.* xx. 17

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS (continued).

CHAPTER I.

LUXURY OR LUST.

1. The meaning of the words 'lust' and 'luxury.'
2. The extent of the prohibition contained under this commandment.
3. The nature and the gravity of the sin of luxury.
4. In the manner of instructing on this commandment we must not fear unsound objections.
5. Adultery: the meaning of this sin, and its twofold malice.
6. Marriage a holy state.
7. The causes which in our time tend to subvert the sanctity of the married state.
8. The beneficial effects of marriage from a human and social point of view.
9. Fornication: its signification. This sin opposed to the doctrine of revealed truth.
10. This sin condemned by reason and conscience.
11. The evil consequences of this sin.
12. The case of some who live together without marriage.
13. The sin of seduction and its effects.

1. By *lust* is meant an inordinate desire of carnal pleasure, and it comprehends every unlawful violation of the virtue of chastity, whether in thought, word, or deed—all kinds of impurity or uncleanness.

The word *luxury* in some of the catechisms is used for this vice, and this is taking it in one of its true senses. Luxury incites to the indulgence of the senses excessively, beyond what God's law permits. As a vice, it consists in the habit or inclination to what is sensuous, or to that which

grátifies the pleasures of the sense. Luxury is therefore here taken as the vice opposed to the virtue of chastity, and the inordinate desire or appetite for those things that are against purity. In this sense it is a sin against reason and conscience, and opposed to the law of God.

2. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* Although adultery alone is mentioned by the commandment, that is, as the Catechism of the Council of Trent explains, because this, besides the malice common to all the sins against purity, contains a special malice—namely, that of injustice towards our neighbour, by reason of the special injury done to a husband or wife through the infidelity of one or the other. And as the law of the Decalogue is a law of justice, our Lord, after forbidding us to take away the life of our neighbour by homicide, now forbids us to take away his honour, which is as precious to him almost as his life, by adultery.

It is true the principal character of adultery is its injustice, but this is not its sole malice ; it also does an injury to the Sacrament of Matrimony, which it profanes, and an injury, frequently, to the legitimate children, and brings disgrace on a whole family.

The commandment not only forbids this sin, but also whatever is contrary to purity in looks, words, or actions.

3. The sin of luxury against this commandment is of its own entire nature grievous or mortal; therefore, if we except the case of those who are married, no levity of matter can be allowed in sins of this kind whenever they may be committed with full deliberation.

4. St. Paul tells us in reference to these sins : *But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh Saints.*[1] This advice should be observed in these matters whenever it is not necessary to speak of them, but inasmuch as impurity is the rock on

[1] Eph. v. 3.

which so many souls are shipwrecked, warnings and instructions are as necessary on this as on any of the other commandments, and I shall therefore have to treat in particular of the principal sins which this commandment forbids; and in the manner in which these things are dealt with in Catholic books of instruction. We have no grounds to fear unsound objections, as, for example, (1) that these instructions suggest evil thoughts to youthful readers or excite prurient curiosity; (2) that young people are frequently very innocent and ignorant about such sins; and (3) that they may be read by those for whom they are not intended. In answer to these, I may say that they prove too much. Virtues require a teacher, vices do not, and young people, unless warned in time and by proper instructions, may be drawn into vicious habits, from which it will be difficult to rescue them afterwards. Besides, even children nowadays have to learn Bible lessons and Bible history, and the Bible certainly speaks of these sins in very distinct terms. A special chapter is given to the subject in our ordinary Catechism, and in our Prayer-Books the sins opposed to the sixth commandment are mentioned with the others in the formulas given for the examination of conscience. Moreover, are people so ignorant as they are supposed to be on this subject? Do we consider that young people read the classics; that young people read the poets and novels; that they read papers and the current literature of the day, not to speak of the public places of amusement, music-halls and the like, that are so much frequented? Ignorance, even in the supposition that it is to be found amongst a certain class, is not innocence, neither is knowledge guilt. There may be the greatest purity with much knowledge, and gross ignorance with the worst species of sensuality. Hence about a social evil, and an evil that is to the ruin of so many thousands of souls, ignorance

is neither to be cultivated nor desired. As to their being read by those for whom they are not intended, I may only remark that a candid and careful perusal of these instructions cannot do any harm to the moral or religious feelings of anyone, and no one, after having read them, need be less pure in heart than he previously was.[1] An author who has published a useful work entitled 'Morality' notices one or two other objections briefly: '"(1) *Altum silentium* should be our motto in this matter." *Altum silentium!* Just as though this time-honoured principle had not been already tried sufficiently long, and found sufficiently wanting! (2) "Sensuality should not be argued with, but resisted." "Resisted." Of course it should! "Should not be argued with." And yet even while I write Vice is whispering temptingly in one's ears, and the loud shrieks of her deceived and deluded victims are assailing us on all sides. (3) "Let well enough alone." "Well enough!" while sensuality, with its destroying abominable flood, is deluging us, and sweeping hurriedly away in its tempestuous, fathomless waters the fairest amongst our women, the best-beloved, the most amiable, perhaps, of our men. Is anything ever "well enough"? Are, at least, the boisterous clamours of vice so?'[2]

We must now treat of some of the sins of luxury which are subversive of the sanctity of marriage, of the moral order of society, and the virtue of individuals.

5. *Adultery.*—This means the sin against purity between two persons, when either one or both are married, or the sin of impurity with another's wife or husband. It is a crime of the deepest dye. In Scripture[3] the temporal punishment assigned to it is no less than death—the same punishment that belonged to murder, and greater than was inflicted for theft. There are two evils in this sin:

[1] See a work entitled 'Morality,' by M. C. Hime.
[2] *Ibid.*, Preface. [3] Lev. xx. 10; Deut. xxii. 22.

(1) The luxury and incontinence of it.

(2) The injustice of it, as it is a deceit of the most injurious kind, for it is the violation of the marriage vow and overthrows the sanctity of marriage. Marriage was by Christ raised to the dignity of a Sacrament, to signify the sacramental and mystical union of Christ and His Church. He, therefore, who sins against the fidelity of the marriage state, dishonours a great Sacrament in its spiritual and most sacred signification.

6. Marriage is a holy estate.

(1) It was instituted by God Himself even in the time of man's innocence.

(2) It signifies to us the mystical union that is between Christ and His Church.

(3) It was adorned and beautified by the presence of Christ, and the first miracle which He wrought.

(4) Upon the sanctity of marriage all human society is based.

(5) It is commended by St. Paul to be honourable among all men.

(6) Those coupled together by God are no more two, but one flesh; God by so joining them together, having taught that it shall never be lawful to put asunder those whom He by matrimony hath made one.

7. There are many causes which tend in our time to the subversion of the sanctity of marriage, and lead to the violation of its most sacred obligation Of these I shall only notice the following:

(1) The tendency to represent marriage as a mere civil contract.

(2) Facilities given for divorce, and the scandals of the Divorce Court.

(3) Unsuitable marriages, and marriages entered into on mere worldly considerations.

8. Where the laws of the Church are attended to in making the contract of marriage, and when it is received worthily as a true Sacrament, and when its grace is allowed to produce its fruit in the souls of married people, then we may hope that married life will promote the following beneficial effects taken from a human and social point of view :

(1) The private comfort of individuals, especially of the female sex. It may be true that all are not interested in this reason ; nevertheless, it is a reason for all to abstain from any conduct which tends in its general consequence to obstruct marriage ; for whatever promotes the happiness of the majority is binding upon the whole.

(2) The production of the greatest number of healthy children, their better education, and the making of due provision for their settlement in life.

(3) The peace of human society, in cutting off a principal source of contention by assigning one woman to one man, and protecting their exclusive rights by sanctions of morality and law.

(4) The better government of society, by distributing the community into separate families, and appointing over each the authority of a master of a family, which has more actual influence than all civil authority put together.

(5) The same end in the additional security which the State receives for the good behaviour of its citizens, from the solicitude they feel for the welfare of their children and their being confined to permanent habitations.[1]

From a Christian point of view, we may add to these the blessings of marriage—that is, those reasons that make it good, and honest and pleasing before God, namely : (1) The procreation of children to be brought up and educated in the fear and love of God. (2) Faith in and

[1] These are enumerated by Paley.

fidelity to each other on the part of husband and wife. (3) The Sacrament and the indissolubility of the marriage tie, by which is signified the indivisible union of Christ and the Church.

These three blessings compensate for all the various troubles and cares of the married state, as they secure the mutual society, help and comfort that the husband and wife ought to have from each other both in prosperity and adversity.

9. *Fornication.*—Although the sin of adultery is alone mentioned by the commandment, yet all other sins against purity, as I have already stated, are forbidden under the name of this one gross crime. For the law of God is perfect; and as all manner of chastity in our thoughts, speech and actions is therein enjoined us, so likewise whatsoever is in the least contrary and prejudicial to a spotless chastity and an inviolate modesty is by that law forbidden. Hence, fornication is also forbidden by this commandment.

This is the sin of incontinence or impurity when committed between unmarried or single people.

That this sin is opposed to revealed religion is clear both from the Old and New Testament. This may be proved first from the Old Testament: *Behold his* (Jacob's) *sons came from the field, and hearing what had passed* (namely, the sin of Sichem with Dina), *they were exceedingly angry, because he* (Sichem) *had done a foul thing in Israel, and committed an unlawful act in ravishing Jacob's daughter.*[1] And, again, in reference to this sin and its punishment, it is said of the guilty person: *If what he chargeth her with be true, and virginity be not found in the damsel, they shall cast her out of the doors of her father's house; and the men of the city shall stone her to death, and she shall die, because she hath*

[1] Gen. xxxiv. 7.

done a wicked thing in Israel . . . and thou shalt take away the evil out of the midst of thee.[1] The enormity of the sin appears also from the words of Ecclesiasticus. *He that joineth himself to harlots will be wicked. Rottenness and worms shall inherit him, and he shall be lifted up for a greater example, and his soul shall be taken away out of the number.*[2]

That this sin is opposed to reason, or evil in itself, opposed to the law of God, and a grievous crime, may be seen from the following texts of the New Testament: *Fly fornication. Every sin that man doth, is without the body; but he that committeth fornication, sinneth against his own body Or know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, Who is in you, Whom you have from God; and you are not your own.*[3] *For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.*[4]

The gravity of the sin is taught by the text: *Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Do not err; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . shall possess the kingdom of God.*[5] We find this sin expressly forbidden by the Apostles in the Acts: *But that we write unto them, that they refrain themselves from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication*, etc.[6]

10. Such a sin is condemned both by reason and conscience. If we listen to the voice of conscience in the matter, it will say: 'Flee youthful lusts; they war against the heart and mind and soul—against me myself—against the well-being of the world. In the heat of passion, no doubt, and whirled along by the blinding excitement of the moment, a man may turn a deaf ear to her kindly counsel, and refuse to listen to her warning voice, ignoring even her

[1] Deut xxii. 20, 21. [2] Ecclus. xix. 3. [3] 1 Cor. vi. 18, 19.
[4] 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4. [5] 1 Cor. vi. 9. [6] Acts xv. 20.

existence, not to say her supremacy. . . . Conscience cannot be altogether silenced by us. Phœnix-like, it will keep ever rising up again and again from out of the cold forgotten ashes of its former self, at times when we least expect it, at moments when we least desire to be reminded of its existence. In the sleepless hours of the dreary night, when we are alone, and feeling deeply, perhaps, our loneliness, when we are sick, peradventure dying. At such times as these, conscience will be often found to start up afresh, and assert its lawful, royal supremacy in the breast, even as in the days of sunny childhood, when its merest word was law—to upbraid and condemn us for having ignored its warning voice and despised its wishes for so long a time.

'"Oh, Conscience, Conscience! man's most faithful friend!
Him canst thou comfort, ease, relieve, defend;
But if he will thy friendly checks forego,
Thou art, oh, woe for him! his deadliest foe."
'CRABBE: *The Struggles of Conscience.*'[1]

Conscience has good grounds for proclaiming herself the enemy of sensuality—if for no other reason, on account of its evil consequences, some of which I may here briefly refer to, taken from the observations of the Archdeacon of Carlisle on the subject.

11. (1) The first and greatest mischief is by consequence. The guilt of promiscuous concubinage consists in its tendency to diminish, and thereby defeat, the several beneficial purposes of marriage.

(2) Fornication supposes prostitution, and prostitution brings and leaves the victim of it to almost certain misery. It is no small quantity of misery in the aggregate which between want, disease and insult is suffered by those outcasts of human society who infest populous cities, the whole of which is a general consequence of fornication, and

[1] 'Morality,' by Hime.

to the increase and continuance of which every act and instance of this sin contributes.

(3) It produces habits of ungovernable lewdness, which introduces the more aggravated crimes of seduction, adultery, infanticide, etc. It depraves the mind and moral character more than any single species of vice whatsoever; and it incapacitates and indisposes the mind for all intellectual, moral and religious pleasure.

(4) It perpetuates a disease which may be accounted one of the severest maladies of human nature, and the effects of which are said to visit the constitutions of even distant generations. Whole wards in our hospitals and lunatic asylums are filled with its victims. From it spring consumption, scrofula, lunacy, idiocy, and paralysis. And what physical pain and mental suffering may not spring from any of these afflictions to both the victims themselves and others connected with or descended from them ?[1]

There are two phases of this existing evil that call for special condemnation—that is, cohabitation without marriage, and the sin of seduction.

12. With regard to the first, without referring to the Scripture injunctions, Paley well says: 'It is immoral, because it is pernicious, that men and women should cohabit without undertaking certain irrevocable obligations and mutually conferring certain civil rights; if, therefore, the law has annexed these rights and obligations to certain forms, so that they cannot be secured or undertaken by any other means, which is the case here (for whatever the parties may promise each other, nothing but the marriage can make their promise irrevocable), it becomes in the same degree immoral that men and women should cohabit without the interposition of these forms.'

In such cases how can we fully represent the evil and

[1] Apud Hime, 'Morality.'

injustice, especially to the woman? She cannot have the same respect for herself as a lawful wife. She will have no honour and respect from her kinsfolk and neighbours. Her temporary dwelling-place is a dishonoured one. Her children will be branded as it were from their birth with infamy, with their mother's shame and their father's crime, and at length she will be cast forth as a vile worthless creature, from whom all virtue and value have departed, as so many thousands of others have been treated.[1]

As for the man—or the *gentleman*, as such a wretch is sometimes called—he who won her and seduced her by his lewd love and base, false promises of constancy and affection, and then, when it suited his convenience or his taste or his humour, betrayed and deserted her, it is not too much to apply to him the comparison of St. Peter—that is, *a brute beast. But these men, as irrational beasts, naturally tending to the snare and to destruction, blaspheming those things which they know not, shall perish in their corruption.*[2] It has been said with truth that the world often makes most unholy distinctions, allows station, power, and wealth to sin with impunity, and calls this iniquity *gallantry* or *intrigue*, while at the same time it most harshly and cowardly judges the defenceless. This is that *respect of persons* which to God is most hateful; this is the mercy which is the child of Satan; this is the toleration which made our Saviour call the Scribes and Pharisees a *generation of vipers*.

13. *Seduction.*—This is the worst kind of fornication. It is stealthily drawing aside from the right path, and into this sin, the virtuous and the innocent. All that has been said against incontinence in general can also be said with tenfold force against this intensified kind of fornication. I

[1] See Hime's treatise on 'Morality.'
[2] 2 St. Peter ii. 12.

need make no excuse for quoting the following passages on this detestable sin :

'My eye wandered over the dark hills, catching every now and then the glow-worm light which came from some house or cottage perched up there. I pictured to myself the daughter of one of these homes carried off to some great town, soon to be lost there in its squalid suburbs, like beautiful spoilt fruit swept away with garbage into the common kennel. The girl, perhaps, is much to blame herself, for we must admit that the fault is not always on one side, and we must not suffer any sickly sentiment to darken truth and justice. Yes, she may be much to blame ; but surely the wiser creature, man, is more so. There was a time—it was one of the basest times the world has ever seen—when seduction was thought a fine and clever thing ; but now who does not see that to delude a woman, a creature easily to be deluded, especially through its affections, is a slight, unworthy transaction, and, but for dire consequences (and guilt), would be ludicrous, like cheating a child at cards ? But when you add to this that in many a case desertion follows so rapidly upon seduction as almost to appear as if they had been planned together, then the smallness of the transaction is absolutely lost in the consideration of its baseness.'[1]

Paley thus concludes his chapter on 'Seduction' : 'Upon the whole, if we pursue the effects of seduction through the complicated misery which it occasions, and if it be right to estimate crimes by the mischief they knowingly produce, it will appear something more than mere invective to assert that not one half of the crimes for which men suffer death in England are so flagitious as this.'[2]

And to the same effect writes George Eliot : 'I'd sooner'

[1] 'Companions of Solitude,' chap. ix.
[2] 'Moral Philosophy,' Book III., chap. iii., p. 111.

(said Adam) ' do a wickedness as I could suffer for myself, than ha' brought *her* to do wickedness . . . and all for a bit o' pleasure as, if he'd a man's heart in him, he'd ha' cut his hand off sooner than he'd ha' taken it. What if he did not foresee what's happened? He foresaw enough; he'd no right to expect anything but harm and shame to her. . . . No, there's plenty o' things folks are hanged for not half so hateful as that; let a man do what he will, if he know's he's to bear the punishment himself, it isn't half so bad as a mean selfish coward, as makes things easy t' himself, and knows all the while the punishment 'll fall on somebody else.'[1]

[1] ' Adam Bede '

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS (continued).

CHAPTER II.

SINS FORBIDDEN BY THESE COMMANDMENTS (*continued*).

1. Two species of the sin of luxury that contain a special malice: (1) Incest. (2) Sacrilege.
2. Sins of thought and word against these commandments. Their different degrees, by Bishop Hay.
3. The occasions of this sin. How the danger must be estimated and judged with regard to songs, plays, books, pictures, etc.
4. Objections answered.
5. Remedies against sins of impurity: (1) Against external causes. (2) Against the wanderings of the imagination. (3) Against the dangers arising from natural dispositions. (4) Prayer in all cases.

THERE are certain other sins against this commandment to which I must refer in order that my instructions may not be incomplete or wanting as to things which it may be necessary and useful for people to know, especially when examining their consciences, and preparing for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance.

1. Two species of the sin of luxury have to be mentioned because they contain a special malice, which have to be explicitly confessed as often as one may be guilty of them. These are the sins known as *incest* and *sacrilege*.

(1) Incest is the sin of impurity when committed with a person related either by consanguinity or affinity within the forbidden degrees of matrimony. It is different in its

gravity—(*a*) according as the persons are related by consanguinity or affinity only; (*b*) according as the grade of relationship is near or more remote.

(2) By sacrilege is to be understood in general a violating or misusing or putting away of things consecrated or appropriated to Divine Service. It has many branches—time, persons, functions, and places. The circumstance of sacrilege, in whatever sin it may be, or in whatever act otherwise sinful it may be found, adds a new gravity and a new species to the sin, inasmuch as all sacrilege is against religion.

The respect that is due to such as are consecrated to the service of God is clearly and emphatically expressed in many places of Holy Writ: *Take heed thou forsake not the Levite all the time that thou livest in the land.*[1] *And the Levite that is within thy gates, beware thou forsake him not.*[2] And why so? Because *God separated the tribe of Levi, to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to stand before Him in the ministry, and to bless in His name.*[3] *To bear the iniquity of the people, and pray for them in the sight of the Lord.*[4] And hence Michas, when the young Levite came and agreed to stay with him as his priest, said: *Now I know God will do me good, since I have a priest of the race of the Levites.*[5] Again, Almighty God says by His Psalmist, *Touch not My anointed, and do no evil to My prophets.*[6] And by the mouth of the Wise Man the Holy Ghost speaks thus: *With all thy soul fear the Lord, and reverence His priests. With all thy strength love Him that made thee, and forsake not His ministers. Honour God with all thy soul, and give honour to the priests. . . . Give them their portion as it is commanded thee*[7]—where we see the fear, love and honour of God immediately followed by the respect due to His ministers as things naturally and necessarily connected.

[1] Deut. xii. 19. [2] *Ibid.* xiv. 27. [3] *Ibid.* x. 8. [4] Lev. x. 17.
[5] Judg. xvii. 13. [6] Psa. civ. 15. [7] Ecclus. vii. 31-34.

These injunctions given to the people with regard to the priests of the Old Law apply with greater force with regard to the priests of the New Law by reason of the greatness and sanctity of their state and functions, and their special consecration to the sacred ministry of Jesus Christ. St. Paul, when he sent Epaphroditus, his fellow-labourer, to the Philippians, said: *Receive him with all joy in the Lord, and treat with honour such as he is.*[1] And in another Epistle he says: *We beseech you, brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; that you esteem them more abundantly in charity for their work's sake. Have peace with them.*[2] *Let the priests that rule well be esteemed worthy of double honour, especially they that labour in the Word and in doctrine.*[3] God has intimated that danger and punishments hang over the head of those that do otherwise—and for what? Not for wronging the Levite, nor for any violence or unlawful sin, but for not loving and cherishing him all the days of thy life.

I have thus far treated only of the kinds of this sin that involve the ruin of two souls instead of one, and he that is a fornicator or an adulterer steals the soul as well as dishonours the body of his neighbour.

2. I shall now call attention to those personal sins that do an injury only to the person guilty of them, and to the sins of thought and word against this commandment, and those things which are considered occasions of sin that are mentioned in our Catechisms.

Bishop Hay thus writes of the different degrees of this sin that are forbidden: 'Such is the malignity of this vice, and so detestable is it in the sight of God, that every kind of it is strictly forbidden. Any voluntary and deliberate consent to the carnal pleasure of impurity, whether in the desires

[1] Phil. ii. 29. [2] 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.
[3] 1 Tim. v. 17.

and thoughts of the heart or in immodest songs, books, unchaste embraces, looks, or touches, except in the lawful use of marriage, is highly criminal in the sight of God. This appears from several reasons: (1) Because one of the Ten Commandments, the ninth, expressly forbids all desires of this fatal crime: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.* As, therefore, the sixth commandment forbids the criminal action, and the ninth the very desire which is the first motion of the will towards it, so all the intermediate degrees are strictly forbidden. (2) Our Saviour expressly says: *You have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say to you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery in his heart*[1]—wherein we see that even the lustful desires of the heart and unchaste looks bring the guilt of adultery upon the soul in the sight of God. How much more will any voluntary delight in the carnal pleasure of lust from unchaste words and actions render the soul criminal before Him! (3) Job says: *I made a covenant with my eyes that I would not so much as think upon a virgin; for what part should God from above have in me, and what inheritance the Almighty from on high?*[2]—that is, I have made a firm resolution with myself not to admit any unchaste looks on a virgin, knowing that if I do so I should lose my part with God, and His inheritance on high. And St. Peter, describing the impious, *who*, he says, *shall perish in their corruption*, among other things says of them: *Having eyes full of adultery, and of sin that ceaseth not, alluring unstable souls . . . children of malediction.*[3] (4) The Scripture expressly forbids all immodest words, as inconsistent with the sanctity of a Christian: *But fornication and all uncleanness, let it not be so much as named among you, as becometh Saints.*[4] (5) Because all these degrees of impurity are not

[1] St. Matt. v. 27, 28. [2] Job. xxxi. 1. [3] 2 St. Pet. ii. 14. [4] Eph. v. 3.

only criminal in themselves and contrary to the law of God, but, from the peculiar malignity of this vice, are all incentives and temptations to greater degrees of guilt, and therefore all immodest books, songs, and conversations are highly unlawful, *for evil communications corrupt good manners*, and he *who loves the danger shall perish in it.*'

3. *The Occasions of this Sin* —The Catechism tells us, amongst other things, that immodest plays and dances are forbidden by this commandment, and that it is sinful to look at them. By immodest plays and dances we have to understand such amusements as are the proximate occasions of sins against purity, and special mention is made also of immodest books and pictures that may lead us to commit sin either in thought, word, or deed. In forming a judgment about such things, we must regard them as evil, inasmuch as they are the occasions of impure sins. The danger of sin in these things may be considered in an absolute or relative sense. The danger may be considered *absolute* if either the plays, books, or dances are of their own nature such as, considering the common frailty of human nature, would incite to impure sins and desires. In such a case they may be considered of themselves dangerous occasions of sin, and to be shunned by everyone. The danger may be considered *relative* when these things only incite to sin on account of the particular infirmity or weakness of the person tempted, or the particular relations between two individuals, or their dispositions. In such cases they are to be avoided by those persons to whom they prove to be the occasion of sin. Before we can condemn things in any wholesale manner, such as plays, dances, and the like, we are bound to know how far they are dangerous and the occasions of sin, and if the ordinary class of devout and pious Christians can be present at them, and take

[1] Hay's 'Devout Christian,' chap. xvi.

part in them without sin, they cannot be considered as unlawful.

In forming a correct judgment on these things, it is necessary also to consider the intention of the agent or the end or cause of such actions. A bad intention may vitiate anything. Therefore, in reading, playing, or dancing, if the purpose be evil, the sin is grievous; but we need only suppose such evil-minded persons as exceptions. If with an honest intention they be engaged in for recreation and amusement, they may not only not be sinful, but acts of virtue and meritorious; if from idle curiosity or petulance, they are not in themselves mortal sins. Sometimes a man must enter into the dangerous occasions of sin from a just cause—namely, through necessity, or for utility or suitableness—and in this case no sin is to be imputed to him.

4. This will answer the objections that may occur to some, and that are commonly used against the lessons here given about avoiding dangerous occasions. Here I may be permitted to quote once more the essay on 'Morality.'

'*What about young medical men and clergymen?* Must they not go at the call of duty into all places and into all company? Must they not try to do good service to every class of persons, no matter whether they be good or evil? And, furthermore, is not a *knowledge of the world* a most important knowledge? And how can it be acquired if one shuts himself up in his room, and never goes anywhere but into the company of the respectable and righteous? Well, to all this my answer is: Of course, at duty's call you must go anywhere; it would be utterly wrong to confine your services only to the righteous, when the publican and sinner have also claims upon you; when duty calls you, then indeed you must go, but no sooner. Wantonness, idle curiosity, love of strange scenes, mere fancy, however, are not duty. And if these, or any one of these, be the only

motives you have for wilfully running into temptation that you ought to avoid, then clearly there is no excuse for you, and you are acting sinfully and foolishly in so doing

'Duty calls the soldier up to the cannon's mouth; sicknesses and loathsome and infectious diseases, more and more trying, perhaps, than any battle scenes, must be faced in the discharge of their duty by the clergyman and physician; and those who would shrink from their self-imposed tasks, those who would run away from their duty, whatever it be, are utterly contemptible creatures, whose unmanliness need not be dwelt upon here. But, then, if duty—duty towards God or towards our neighbour—does *not* call us, we should not go to any place where there is strong temptation to sin; to do so gratuitously and needlessly is sinful. And then as to the *knowledge of the world:* you need not be at all afraid that you will not be obliged to encounter many a disgraceful proceeding, and be made acquainted with many a sinful and painfully licentious act, without purposely and needlessly going in quest of any such; we are surrounded by every kind of iniquity, and cannot avoid contact with it. Why, then, go deliberately into the way of temptation, with which you fortunately, *ex hypothesi*, have no personal concern? How absurd the pretence that you are anxious to acquire a *knowledge of the world!* Green-rooms in theatres, moreover, disreputable bar-rooms, noisy taverns, weak maid servants, unprotected shop-girls, immoral books and songs, vile police-court reports, indecent pictures, unseemly conversation, midnight shouts, tipsy dances and revelry, do not constitute *the world*, least of all are they that part of it which inflammable and inexperienced young men are at all required or ought to study.'

5. *Remedies against Sins of Impurity.*—We have explained the nature of these sins and their causes or occasions, and

it is fitting that we should also mention the remedies and the means of protecting ourselves against their stain. Man is moved to this sin (1) by external causes, namely, by external objects and occasions; (2) by internal causes, namely, the phantasy and imagination, or the natural complexion or disposition of his sensitive appetite or inclinations.

The particular remedies against concupiscence are those which take away the foregoing causes or roots, as it were, of the evil.

(1) The external causes may be removed by flying from the objects or occasions of sin, as explained already; and I may especially mention the necessity of avoiding dangerous reading, once more. Who can enumerate the evils, both to religion and society, which the reading of bad books has produced in modern times? How often, under the guard of a specious erudition, are the shafts of infidelity or error concealed! How often, says St. Basil, is the poison of immorality conveyed to the innocent mind by bad books, under a graceful or honeyed style! Every good Christian should therefore scrupulously abstain from reading dangerous or suggestive books, and prevent them as much as possible from being read by others Should any person say that he desires to read them merely for the sake of learning, reply to him in the words of St. Jerome—that it is better to ignore with safety what cannot be learned without danger.

(2) Against the wanderings of the phantasy and imagination we must guard by instantly invoking the names of Jesus and Mary, and banishing at once the evil suggestion. The mind should be employed always with something good and useful, and we must fly idleness. It is seldom that a really studious man has the misfortune of becoming a prey to impurity. It seems to be the punishment reserved for idleness. Even the unfortunate inhabi-

tants of Sodom did not fall into such guilt and punishment until they gave themselves up to idleness. Occupation preserves chastity.

(3) Against the dangers arising from the natural disposition or complexion of the body or the sensitive appetite, we have to make use of mortifications, fasting, and abstinence, etc. We should mortify ourselves in food and drink and the pleasures of the table. This is a species of self-indulgence which nourishes luxury. Hence all the Saints mortified themselves after the example of St. Paul, who said: *I chastise my body and bring it into subjection, lest whilst I preach to others I myself may become a castaway.* We have to keep a watch over our senses by flying from the sight of dangerous objects, keeping the eyes, the windows of the soul, well guarded.

(4) The most important and necessary remedy in all cases of danger and temptation, and especially in dangers and temptations of this kind, is *fervent prayer: As I knew*, says the Wise Man, *that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, and this also was a point of wisdom, to know whose gift it was: I went to the Lord, and besought Him, and said with my whole heart.*[1] This is one of the kind of devils of which our Saviour says that they *are not cast out but by prayer and fasting*[2]

Now, under prayer, as a preservative against this vice, is included not only vocal, but also mental prayer, or meditation upon the great truths of eternity; and mortification includes not only fasting and corporal austerities, but also the practice of general self-denial.

[1] Wisd. viii. 21.
[2] St. Matt. xvii. 20. See Hay's 'Devout Christian,' *in loco.*

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS (*continued*).

CHAPTER III.

ON CHASTITY.

1. Chastity enjoined by these commandments. The nature of this virtue.
2. The division and excellence of this virtue.
3. Virginity: its nature. How it may be lost and restored.
4. Chastity is a virtue most pleasing to God, proved by many considerations.
5. This virtue need not be confounded with the state of celibacy, or profession of the Evangelical Counsel.
6. Chastity conducive to health, proved by various authorities and extracts.
7. Objections against the practice of chastity answered. The 'wild oats' theory refuted by four considerations.
8. The falsehood that all young men exceed the bounds of morality exposed.
9. An answer to the excuse derived from the example of respectable old men who were once supposed to be immoral.
10. The state of future happiness, and special rewards to be bestowed in heaven on the pure of heart.

1. THESE commandments, which forbid luxury and impurity, enjoin chastity. This is the virtue opposed to that vice and all the sins that proceed from it. After treating of the vice and its different species, we have now to consider and explain the virtue and its obligations as enjoined by the moral law of God.

Chastity is a virtue which moderates the sensual appetite and excludes unlawful concupiscence and all impure in-

dulgence of the senses. It is opposed to luxury in all its species, either of thought, word, or deed.

It is a special virtue, because it has a special object of its own, namely, to overcome concupiscence and the impure desires of our nature. The principle of procreation, next to that of self-preservation, is the most powerful within the human breast, and therefore a special virtue is required in order to keep it within lawful bounds. It is a virtue distinct from abstinence, which has for its object the moderation of the appetite for food and drink; and it is contained under the general virtue of temperance, which is the virtue ordained for the moderation of all concupiscence and pleasures, either of the sense of touch or taste.

2. Chastity is divided into *conjugal* chastity, *virginal* chastity, and that of *widowhood*. *Conjugal* chastity does not imply any greater excellence than abstinence from unlawful pleasures against purity, or against the sanctity of the married state. The chastity of widowhood adds something to common chastity, but does not include all that is perfect in the matter of this virtue, and it is inferior to virginity, which is a special virtue of chastity in its most perfect form.

Virginity is not the most perfect of all virtues, but in its own kind, namely, in the matter of chastity, it is the most excellent, inasmuch as it transcends conjugal chastity and that of widowhood, and therefore it is considered a special ornament, and adds a most attractive beauty to the soul.

The Council of Trent[1] has declared it of faith that it is better and more blessed to remain in a state of virginity or celibacy than to get married, and hence we can understand the value of this virtue before God and in the eyes of His Church.

3. Virginity, inasmuch as it is a virtue, is in the soul; or virginal chastity, as it is called, is that chastity which

[1] Sess. XXIV., Can. 10.

abstains from all impure pleasures, and proposes to abstain from them always. Its formal nature and its complement consists in the resolution always to abstain from such pleasures, and in keeping that resolution.

This virtue may be lost: (1) by any external or internal sin against holy purity; (2) by changing the resolution of always abstaining from all pleasures of the kind, and consequently by forming the intention of getting married. The lost virtue may, however, be again recovered: (1) by repentance, provided no grave external sin against purity has been committed; (2) by again renewing the resolution of perpetual chastity.

It is not necessary to say more about corporal virginity, which may be lost by a grave external sin of impurity, than to notice that though this corporal integrity remain lost, the soul may by repentance and the exercise of the virtue of chastity reach to the highest degrees of this virtue, and obtain far greater rewards from God than those that have never fallen; at the same time, the body, not the soul, may bear traces of the sin committed: the peculiar reward of innocent and unimpaired virginity belongs to those who have never violated their chastity.

4. We may now state, with Bishop Hay, that chastity, or purity, is one of the virtues most agreeable to God, which he proves from the following considerations: (1) God calls us particularly to the practice of this virtue, as being that in which our sanctification in a special manner consists. *This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour. Not in the passion of lust, like the Gentiles that know not God . . . for God hath not called us to uncleanness, but unto sanctification. Therefore he that despiseth these things, despiseth not man but God.*[1]

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 3-8.

(2) Jesus Christ, while on earth, showed a particular love for this virtue, and for those who practised it. He would have none but the purest of virgins for His mother. He ever showed a particular love to His virgin disciple St. John, who on that account was called the beloved disciple, and at His death He recommended His virgin mother to none but His virgin disciple. (3) It makes a person like to the Angels themselves, for, as our Saviour says: *At the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the Angels of God in Heaven.*[1] Nay, as St. Chrysostom observes, it makes a person even superior to the Angels, by the victories gained over the temptations of impurity, of which the Angels have no experience. Hence the Scripture says: *A holy and shame-faced woman is grace upon grace, and no price is worthy of a continent soul.*[2]

5. The virtue of chastity of which I speak here is not to be confined to, or confounded with, the state of celibacy, or that which is vowed by the profession of the Evangelical Counsels. These are free, and to be embraced by those who receive a Divine vocation to embrace Holy Orders or the religious state. Such a state and profession is not rigorously commanded, but only counselled. The virtue of chastity is commanded and obligatory, and therefore my instructions are intended for all, and especially for single people living in the world. In another work[3] I have already explained the Evangelical Counsels and their obligations with regard to those who have made vows to observe them. Here I wish to explain the obligations of Christians in general, imposed by the virtue of chastity, and, above all, as they affect young and old living unmarried in the world. For such as these wrong impressions should be removed and wicked objections answered.

6. According to the best medical testimony, continence

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 30. [2] Ecclus. xxvi. 19, 20. [3] 'Convent Life.'

is quite possible, and not only compatible with, but conducive to, health; although, in obedience to a universal law of nature, continence becomes very difficult when the body has become accustomed to incontinence, but even then it is not impossible nor injurious, but very beneficial to health. In proof of this I may quote the following extracts:

'Unmarried men who intend to lead a celibate life must not believe that they can do so if they indulge indiscriminately in the pleasures of the table; for them abstemious diet . . . is absolutely essential; and so assisted they may with impunity to themselves, and advantage to society, continue to lead a celibate life' (Dr. Acton).

'To private knowledge is added the weight of solemn public testimony from men of ardent temperament, who have reached the full vigour of life in the practice of chastity. . . . Strong testimony as to the compatibility of chastity and health is furnished by the Catholic priesthood (and, it might be added, by the countless number of religious men and women in every age and in every country). It is well known as a positive fact that vast numbers of men (and women) are found in every age and country, who honestly keep their vows, and who, by avoidance of temptation, by direction of the mind to intellectual pursuits, and devotion to great humanitarian objects, pass long lives in health and vigour.'

'The opportunity of wide observation enjoyed by the head-masters of public schools, and all engaged in education, lends great weight to their testimony. The master of over 800 boys and young men states: "The result of my personal observation, extending over a great many years, is that hard exercise in the open air is, in most cases, an efficient remedy against vicious propensities. A large number of our young men thus make a law unto themselves, and pass the period of their youth in temperance and

purity, till they have realized a position that enables them to marry." [1]

'In primitive Christian communities, and many countries and village populations uncorrupted by the stimulants of luxury, we observe the advantage of chastity to the health of youth. In these simple, healthy societies, an earnest religious teaching which subordinates material to spiritual life, and the strong public sentiment of the village, combine with the out-door life to preserve the honesty of the young men and women, who become the parents of vigorous children who, in their turn, form the strong backbone of the nation.'

'We thus learn from the experience of the past, and from a comprehensive view of existing facts, that self-control and entire chastity are a great advantage to the health of a young man; that all his powers will be strengthened, and that he will render a service to his country, to the vigour of his race, by leading an entirely virtuous life before marriage.'

'The tender father, the wise mother, may throw aside the counsels of despair, and learn the truth: that virtue is the only safe life for their sons. Let them hold, with the strong conviction of positive knowledge, to the truth, that chastity at this early age (and at any age) strengthens the physical and mental powers, increases the force needed to combat any inherited morbid tendency, preserves the self-respect, the reverence for womanhood, which are the essence of manliness, and prepares the young man for that great institution—on which the highest future of every nation depends—true and happy marriage.'

'Every other course of life is full of danger to the young man—danger both of mind and body; danger to himself and to others; dangers, not seen at first in their full force, but becoming more and more apparent at every step

[1] Hime, 'Morality.'

of the evil course, until the far-seeing eye beholds the full desolation of corrupted manhood and wasted womanhood which results from the first step in the downward road.'[1]

These extracts will serve to throw much light on the Catholic doctrine and practice to those outside the Catholic Church, who are carried away by false statements and calumnies against the religious state and religious communities, who do not seem to understand that such a state is not only possible, but one of the highest perfection and happiness both for soul and body. It is unintelligible to any honest man how any people can listen to such gross calumnies, unless their own minds and hearts are already corrupted to such an extent that they will not believe that others can and do live pure and chaste lives adorned by all the other Christian virtues.

7. There are one or two other common objections or theories that are urged in justification of the conduct of some who hesitate to embrace a virtuous and honest manner of life. The first may be called the 'wild oats theory,' which is well described by an author whom I have already quoted on this subject. It is the gratifying delusion that 'it is quite time enough to settle down and become steady by-and-by'; that 'youth is the proper season for enjoyment, for being wild and jolly,' as if, forsooth, to be 'jolly,' 'wild,' 'extravagant,' 'sinful,' 'unchaste,' and 'happy' were all synonymous terms, the period for sowing one's 'wild oats.'

He uses four considerations in answer to this theory, which show how extremely absurd are these sentiments as an excuse for sensuality.

(1) *In the first place*, sensuality, whether indulged in in youth or in middle or old age, is sinful, and therefore

[1] 'Counsel to Parents,' by Dr. E. Blackwell, apud Hime.

ought not under any circumstance to be indulged in by those, no matter whether young men, middle-aged or old, who wish to keep God's holy will and commandments.

(2) *In the second place*, during the process of sowing his wild oats here, this wilful transgressor, this deliberate offender, may contract such a taste for sin that he may not find it by any means so easy or so agreeable as he presupposes to cast off his yoke, whenever he is pleased to think reformation desirable or necessary.

(3) *In the third place*, he may not only have become thoroughly degraded and debased himself, but (fearful reflection!) he may also find to his intense grief, possibly even to his extreme surprise, that he has been the means of corrupting the character and undermining the good principles of others who had been unfortunately influenced and led astray by his evil example, or were more or less associated with him in scenes of early vice.

(4) *Fourthly and lastly*, supposing that the youth who, according to the hypothesis, is thus weakly yielding up his conscience and self-esteem to the dominion of his passions, and advisedly defers turning over a new leaf till 'to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow,' should die suddenly of heart disease, let us say, or by drowning, or in a railway accident, 'cut off even in the blossoms of his sin'—what then? I ask, what then?

'Or supposing that he die not thus suddenly even in an instant, but that he be laid up suddenly prostrate with some painfully debilitating illness, such as typhoid or typhus fever or small-pox, for example, or scarlatina, or some other still more painful disease where the surgeon's knife is necessary to relieve, though possibly it may be incapable of restoring to health, the unfortunate sufferer: how in this case, I ask, is it possible for him to collect his thoughts, and become religious and sincerely penitent for the first time in his life

when death's stern, angry voice is summoning him away? For who can reflect candidly on the past, and look forward with resignation and prayerfully to the future, when, with torturing spasm and burning brow, he is conscious of little beyond his weakness, of little beyond the pain and agony that thrill through his writhing, wretched frame; or when, to stretch our imagination a very little step further, he may be even in a state of bodily collapse and complete prostration of his mental powers? In short, may not a time come when, mental and bodily vigour being gone, it is "too late too mend"?'

Treasure up, then, deeply in your hearts, and let it be a constantly active and restraining principle in your conduct throughout life, the moral of the parable of the foolish virgins:

'Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.
No light had we; for that we do repent.
And learning this, the Bridegroom will relent.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

'No light: so late! and dark and chill the night!
Oh, let us in, that we may find the light!
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.
Have we not heard the Bridegroom is so sweet?
Oh, let us in, though late, to kiss His feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now.'[1]

8. I shall notice one or two other excuses that are so false and misleading, but, nevertheless, are often used for the worst of purposes—that is, the falsehood that 'all young men exceed the bounds of morality,' and that those amongst them who have lived pure and chaste have been mere 'prigs,' 'milksops,' 'weaklings,' 'muffs,' men whose society must have been uncommonly 'slow' (to use the slang phraseology of the vicious). On the contrary, many can look to old acquaintances who as young men lived

[1] Tennyson's 'Guinevere.'

pure, chaste lives, uncontaminated by the grosser vices which constitute dissipation, and these, in the words of Mr. Hime, who refers to them, 'were the first specimens of the young men at the time I refer to in the University . . . and were acknowledged superior to the large majority of their class fellows in all respects—physically as well as morally and intellectually.

'They were remarkable for their brilliant successes at the most searching and critical examinations, quite as much as they were for the propriety and steadiness of their conduct; and they were remarkable also for their distinguished achievements in the racquet-court, in the gymnasium, in the hunting-field, in the football-field, on the water, as sportsmen, and at cricket.'

'All young men, I repeat, do *not* fall; and among those who scorn to yield up the supremacy of their conscience and self-esteem to that of their passions, you will find, I again repeat, even as you might naturally expect, not only the most diligent and distinguished of our University students, but also her ablest cricketers, football-players, oarsmen, athletes, and sporting men. It is among such as these you will find your most agreeable and pleasant companions, your most loyal and truest friends.'

The foregoing remarks and arguments will furnish an answer to all that can be said against a pure and chaste life being the best and the happiest for all, young and old. There is, however, one other form which an excuse may sometimes take, from the example of those who were wild and vicious in their youth, and afterwards settled down to a steady, quiet and respectable position in life. It is shaped in this manner, by the author already so often quoted: 'But look at old Mr. So-and-So! He was an awfully wild fellow in his youth, and yet he is now one of the best and happiest and most respected old men I know.'

9. How shall I summarize that author's remarks in answer to this? First, it is not by any means certain that the old man was at all wild in his youth. Old men boast, and young people often hear charges against them only from somebody else.

Supposing, secondly, that he was a wild fellow: he may not be now one of the *most respected;* and even though reformed, he may be far from being the happiest of men. (1) Often and often this miscalled happy man, when lonely and dejected, may be filled with sad, vain regrets as with many a retrospection crushed he broods over the past time wasted and abused; (2) his moral and physical weakness maybe reappearing in his innocent children, in revenge, as it were, upon him for the sins of his youth; (3) what of the friends—male or female—whose prospects of happiness he may have entirely blighted, whose morals he may have corrupted by his own evil communications? (4) what of the fact that he has actually made the world worse through his own sins?

Can such a one, weighed down with reflections like these, be called *happy?* Can his old age, even if *respected*, be as peaceful and as calm as it would have been had *he never walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful?*

10. I may now conclude this chapter on chastity, by looking to the state of future happiness, and the peculiar rewards which shall be bestowed in heaven upon those who practise this virtue here on earth.

'The names of the Father and of the Lamb are written on their foreheads; they follow and attend the Lamb whithersoever He goes, and sing a new canticle of praise which no other can sing. *And I beheld*, says St. John: *and lo a Lamb stood upon Mount Zion, and with Him an hundred and forty-four thousand who were purchased*

from the earth. . . . These are they who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were purchased from among men, the firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.[1]

Let us therefore remember the recommendations in the writings of the Apostles, thus: *In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God in . . . chastity.*[2] *The fruit of the spirit is charity . . . modesty, continency, chastity.*[3] *Be thou an example to the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity.*[4]

Finally, let us bear in mind that the state of celibacy, in which this virtue is practised in the greatest perfection, is preferred to that of matrimony, because it frees us from many cares which attend the married state, and leaves the mind at liberty to attend to the service of God. *He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God. But he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided. And the unmarried woman and the virgin thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit. But she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband. And this I speak for your profit, that you may have power to attend upon the Lord without impediment.*[5]

[1] Apoc. xiv. 35. [2] 2 Cor. vi. 4-6. [3] Gal. v. 22, 23.
[4] 1 Tim. iv. 12. [5] 1 Cor. vii. 32-35. See Hay's 'Devout Christian.'

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS (continued).

CHAPTER IV.

ABSTINENCE AND SOBRIETY.

1. The meaning of temperance, abstinence, and sobriety.
2. The vice of gluttony as opposed to abstinence.
3. The five defects of gluttony enumerated by St. Thomas: (1) Præpropere. (2) Laute. (3) Nimis. (4) Ardente. (5) Studiose.
4. The virtue of sobriety.
5. The Catholic teaching with regard to the use and abuse of intoxicating drink.
6. The rule given by St. Paul on this subject.
7. A warning to teetotalers.
8. Scripture proofs by which sobriety is enjoined.
9. Drunkenness the sin opposed to sobriety. The gravity of the sin, and its evil consequences.
10. Extract from an address issued by the united episcopate of the venerable and most faithful Church of Ireland on this subject.
11. Words of Cardinal Manning and of Archbishop Ireland on the same subject.

1. TEMPERANCE is a virtue which directs us to the right and lawful use of all sensual pleasures in general; but here we are to consider it only as it regards the pleasures of eating and drinking. In this light it may be called *abstinence* or *sobriety*. Abstinence teaches us to observe due moderation in the use of meat and drink not intoxicating, so as never to exceed in quantity, nor be over-nice and delicate as to quality, nor give any signs of too great an attachment to those pleasures, either by speaking of them or by an excessive use of them. Sobriety is a virtue that

teaches us to moderate the appetite, and our pleasure in the use of inebriating drinks. The vices opposed to these two are *gluttony* and *drunkenness*.

Abstinence is a virtue according as it is regulated by reason, and it means that we should abstain from the excessive use of food, and drink (not intoxicant when speaking of drink). The pleasures of good food are calculated to draw away our mind from the consideration of higher things, on account of the necessity of food, which men require to preserve life, and the greatness of the desire of living, which is implanted in their nature. Hence, we have fast and abstinence prescribed by the Church, to enable us to cultivate this virtue, and to overcome the vice of gluttony, with all its evil consequences.

In this place I need not go into the full explanation of the laws of the Church with regard to fasting and abstinence. I am here concerned with these things chiefly inasmuch as they come under the moral law of God and bear upon this commandment, in the sense that abstinence is a great means of enabling us to keep pure and chaste, and indulgence in food and drink is the source of temptations and sins against purity.

2. *Gluttony* is, as I have said, the vice opposed to abstinence. It is an inordinate desire of food or drink, not intoxicating. In eating, two things may be considered—the food itself, and the eating of it; and on this account the deordination is twofold. (1) As to the food itself. Gluttony seeks that which is rich and precious or expensive as to its substance, that which is over-nice and delicately prepared as to quality, and as to quantity it exceeds by eating too much. (2) As to the manner of eating, gluttony may be committed by eating at undue times and too often, or too voraciously at any time.

Gluttony thus considered is a venial sin of its own nature,

even though a person may eat to excess—unless it be indulged in to such a degree as to render a person unable for his other obligations, and unless evil, sinful consequences are foreseen as the usual result of such indulgence; for gluttony is the youthful parent of many other sins, and hence it is numbered as one of the seven capital vices.

Our Saviour's example in repelling the devil's temptation to work a miracle to satisfy His necessity for food is used for our instruction, and to teach us to avoid not only every excess, but every other inordinate circumstance regarding the time, place, mode, etc., of taking the food which is necessary for us.

St. Thomas enumerates five defects that may be committed in this respect, namely: *Præpropere*, *Laute*, *Nimis*, *Ardente*, *Studiose.*

3. (1) *Præpropere*—viz., to eat or drink without great necessity before or after the regular time of meals. St. Philip Neri prohibited this defect most severely to all his penitents and disciples, as one quite fatal to an inferior spirit.

(2) *Laute*—that is, sumptuously. The sums expended in sumptuous fare at table might so often be applied to relieve the necessities of the poor. Frugality and simplicity in diet are commended by all masters of the spiritual life.

(3) *Nimis*—too much. Let the two rules given by St. Jerome guard us against this defect. The first is: *Sit tibi moderatus cibus et nunquam venter explitus.* (Let your food be moderate, so as never to surfeit the stomach.) He wishes this rule never to be departed from. He desires it to be especially attended to on festivals, when a greater variety of things is sometimes offered at table. For this is done in *signum sanæ lætitiæ*, and in order that the poor should also have reason to rejoice, but by no means that

everything so offered should be greedily devoured in honour of the Saint who pleased the Almighty by his fasting.

The second rule is: *Quando comedis cogita quod statim tibi orandum illico et legendum est.* (When you eat, consider that immediately after you have to be employed in prayer, or reading, or study.)

(4) *Ardente*—with avidity or precipitation, as beasts are accustomed to feed. Too great an avidity for food cost Esau the loss of his primogeniture, and daily costs multitudes the loss of their health.

(5) *Studiose*—viz., to be anxious about the quality or variety of our food, or about the mode of preparing it, as epicures are. To occupy our minds too much with the thought of our food is, moreover, degrading to our nature. *Esca ventri*, cries the Apostle: food *for the belly*—a vile part of the body—not for the mind, *non menti, sed ventri;* and the belly for food, *et venter escis*—not our thoughts or mind for food. The one is well adapted to the other, for both are vile, temporal, and destined to corruption; our soul, on the contrary, is immortal, and is made to think of God, to know and to love Him. If, therefore, it thinks not of Him, but of vile food, do we not clearly degrade ourselves to the level of those brutes who make a god of their belly—*quorum Deus venter est?*[1]

Let these maxims regulate our lives; let us, like the Saints, leave the care of our food, health, and life to the loving providence of God; let us think about our studies, His Divine glory, and the interests of religion, and He will have care of the rest. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all those things will be added unto you.*[2]

4. *Sobriety.*—This is a virtue which, as I have said, directs us in the right and lawful use of inebriating drinks.

[1] Phil. iii. 19.

[2] See 'Meditations on the Truths of Religion,' by Bishop Kirby, notes on 27th Meditation.

Where we find a special impediment to a right and rational manner of life, a special virtue is required for its removal. Inebriating drink is a special impediment to the right use of reason, inasmuch as it disturbs the brain by its fume, and hence a special virtue is required to remove this obstacle, and that virtue is sobriety.

5. We must attend in this matter to Catholic teaching with regard to the use and abuse of intoxicating liquors.

'To deny the lawfulness of the use of such liquors, to assert that alcohol is a kind of evil principle, and its use prohibited, is a heresy. It is to contradict the whole of the teaching of the Old and New Testaments, and the universal traditions of the Catholic Church. The teaching of her Divine Founder began with the miracle of the conversion of water into wine at a marriage feast, and it concluded with the conversion of wine into His Blood, by which He instituted the perpetual marriage feast between Himself and His Church. The efforts of some modern sectarians to explain all this away, and to assert that the wine so often praised or promised in the Old Testament, and used by our Lord in the New Dispensation, was nothing but unfermented syrup, have been truly characterized as nothing less than "indecent." There have been heresies on this subject from the beginning. Some of the early sects of Gnostics and Manichees forbade the use of wine even in the administration of the Holy Eucharist, substituting water or milk in its place. Tatian, who died in 174, was the founder of the Syrian heretics called Encratites, Hydroparastales, or Aquarians, alluded to by St. Clement. Similar sects appeared from time to time all through the Middle Ages. Catholic writers, therefore, while exhorting the faithful to voluntary abstinence, or to the observance of the restrictions of the Church on days of fasting and abstinence, most carefully admonish them that in this

they must not be moved by the false doctrines of heretics, or act as if they were still under the legal prohibitions of Judaism. They never cease to warn them that the true motives of abstinence are the subjugation of the flesh, obedience to lawful authority, or charity and condescension to others.'[1]

6. The use of intoxicating drinks and the abstinence from them may be followed according to the rule fixed by the holy Apostle, and thus explained by Julianus Pomerins: 'The holy Apostle has fixed the rule when he says: *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury*,[2] as though he had said, "It is not the nature of wine, but the excessive use of it, which causes and nourishes impurity." Therefore, I do not prohibit you to use wine, but to be intoxicated with it, since the moderate use of wine strengthens a weak stomach, while drunkenness weakens both soul and body. To his disciple Timothy, who had injured himself by long abstinence, and disarranged his stomach by the use of water, he orders the use of a little wine, saying: *Do not still drink water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and for thy frequent infirmities*.[3] According, then, to this teaching, they in no way offend against abstinence who take wine, not for drunkenness, but only for the health of the body. Where there is no weakness, it is good to abstain from wine, lest the indulgence which strengthens a weak body inflame a healthy one.'

The same author also says: 'But since both Manichees and other heretics are able to abstain and to fast, detesting flesh as unclean, not for abstinence' sake, and using only bread and water, let us not consider it a great thing if we abstain from what they also reject, but where faith commends our abstinence and charity completes it. These

[1] 'The Discipline of Drink,' by Rev. T. E. Bridgett, pp. 7, 8.
[2] Eph. v. 18. [3] 1 Tim. v. 23.

virtues they have not, and therefore, though they may kill themselves with their abstinences, edification and perfection they can never obtain.'

7. Again, as a warning to teetotalers and Blue Ribbon Army people, the same author advises: 'Let us not, on account of our abstinence, prefer ourselves to those Catholic Christians who, either not being able or not being willing to abstain, receive in thanksgiving whatever God has granted to our use, lest, if we boast, they be found to have more humility and other virtues, whereby they will be justly preferred to us who abstain. Let us, then, abstain from pride and boasting, the enemies of all virtues, that our abstinence and our fasts may be useful to us.'

In the same spirit as the above passage are the words of St. Gildas, a Briton and a monk, who wrote about the year 565. 'Abstinence from food,' he says, 'without charity, is useless. Those who fast moderately, but carefully keep the heart pure before God, are better than those who eat no flesh, nor use horses nor carriages, and on that account think themselves better than others. They measure their bread, but boast without measure, drink only water, but quaff large draughts of hatred. . . . Our Lord pronounces those blessed who hunger and thirst after justice, not those who drink water and despise their neighbours.'[1]

8. Having explained the Catholic doctrine with regard to the use of intoxicating drinks, I may now add the proofs from Holy Scripture by which sobriety is recommended to all.

It is much recommended—(1) as a virtue proper to all true Christians: *All you are children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night nor of darkness, therefore let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober; for they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that are*

[1] See 'The Discipline of Drink,' p. 18 *et seq.*

drunk, are drunk in the night: but let us who are of the day be sober, having on the breast-plate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.[1] (2) As one of the principal things which the Son of God came down from heaven to teach mankind; for *the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men, instructing us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly and justly and godly in this world.*[2] (3) As the necessary qualification of the hope of a Christian: *Wherefore, having the loins of your mind girt up, being sober, trust perfectly in the grace which is offered you.*[3] (4) As a most necessary means for avoiding the snares of the devil: *Be sober and watch, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour.*[4] (5) As a special gift from God: *God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sobriety.*[5] (6) As a virtue necessary for salvation, especially in women; for, *Adam was not seduced; but the woman being seduced, was in the transgression. Yet she shall be saved through child-bearing, if she continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.*[6] (7) As greatly conducing to health of body and long life: *Sound and wholesome sleep is with a moderate man; he shall sleep till morning, and his soul shall be delighted with him.*[7] *He that is temperate shall prolong life.*[8]

9. *Drunkenness* is the sin opposed to the virtue of sobriety, and it means excess in intoxicating drink, to the violent loss or disturbance of the use of reason. It is a mortal sin of its own nature. The matter or excess is grave if drunkenness be perfect—that is, if the use of reason be lost for a notable time, say for the space of an hour. Any physical indisposition or suffering is not to be taken as a certain sign of perfect or complete intoxication.

[1] 1 Thess. v. 5 *et seq.* [2] Tit. ii. 11 *et seq.* [3] 1 St. Pet. i. 13.
[4] *Ibid.* v. 8. [5] 2 Tim. i. 7. [6] 1 Tim. ii. 14, 15.
[7] Ecclus. xxxi. 24. [8] *Ibid.* xxxvii. 34.

Drunkenness, that by which one's self or another is deprived of the use of reason, can never be directly wished or caused, because it is evil in itself. It might be lawful sometimes to give to a sick person an inebriating draught to remedy a disease or malady, because in such a case the privation of the use of reason is only caused indirectly and by accident.

'The nature of the sin of drunkenness and the evils consequent upon it are made clear to us from repeated testimonies of the Holy Scriptures. (1) *He that is delighted in passing his time over wine leaveth a reproach in his strongholds.*[1] *Wine is a luxurious thing, and drunkenness riotous; whosoever is delighted therewith shall not be wise.*[2] *Look not upon the wine when it is yellow, when the colour thereof shineth in the glass; it goeth in pleasantly, but it will in the end bite like a snake, and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk.*[3] *Wine drunken with excess is bitterness to the soul. The heat of drunkenness is the stumbling-block of the fool, lessening strength and causing wounds.*[4] (2) Many woes are pronounced against it: *Who hath woe? whose father hath woe? who hath contentions? who fall into pits? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? Surely they that pass their time in wine, and study to drink off their cups.*[5] *Woe to you that rise up in the morning to follow drunkenness, and to drink till the evening to be inflamed with wine.*[6] And not only against those who get drunk, but also those who are strong enough to drink great quantities, the woe is equally pronounced: *Woe to you that are mighty to drink wine, and are stout men at drunkenness.*[7] (3) It excludes from the kingdom of heaven: *Do not err: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . nor drunkards . . . shall possess the kingdom of God.*[8] *Now the works of the flesh*

[1] Prov. xii. 11. [2] *Ibid.* xx. 1. [3] *Ibid.* xxiii. 31, 32.
[4] Ecclus. xxxi. 39, 40. [5] Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. [6] Isa. v. 11.
[7] *Ibid.* v. 22. [8] 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness . . . drunkenness, revellings, and such like, of which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God.[1] (4) It leads and exposes one to the greatest crimes, and to the most fatal consequences. By it Noah was exposed to the ridicule of his son, which brought a fatal curse upon a large branch of his posterity. By it Lot was induced to commit a double incest; by it Holophernes lost his life; by it Herod was hurried on to murder St. John the Baptist. It changes men into brutes, robs them of reason, shortens their lives, consumes their substance, ruins the peace of their families, foments their passions and lusts, makes them slaves to sensual inclinations, unfits them for all spiritual duties, exposes them to temptations, and shuts out the grace of God. Drunkenness, when habitual, is seldom or ever cured, but drags down the soul to hell.'[2]

The means to be used against this evil, as well as the evil itself, are well expressed in an address issued by the united episcopate of the venerable and most faithful Church of Ireland in the following words:

10. 'With deepest pain, and after the example of the Apostle, weeping, we say that the abominable vice of intemperance still continues to work dreadful havoc among our people, marring in their souls the work of religion, and, in spite of their rare natural and supernatural virtues, changing many among them into enemies of the *Cross of Christ, whose end is destruction; whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame.*[3] Is it not, dearly beloved, an intolerable scandal, that in the midst of a Catholic nation like ours there should be found so many slaves of intemperance, who habitually sacrifice to brutal excess in

[1] Gal. v. 19, 21.

[2] See Hay's 'Devout Christian,' ch. xvi.

[3] Phil. iii. 18, 19.

drinking, not only their reason, but their character, the honour of their children, their substance, their health, their life, their souls, and God Himself? To drunkenness we may refer, as to its baneful cause, almost all the crime by which the country is disgraced, and much of the poverty from which it suffers. Drunkenness has wrecked more homes, once happy, than ever fell beneath the crowbar in the worst days of eviction; it has filled more graves and made more widows and orphans than did the famine; it has broken more hearts, blighted more hopes, and rent asunder family ties more ruthlessly, than the enforced exile to which their misery has condemned emigrants. Against an evil so widespread and so pernicious, we implore all who have at heart the honour of God and the salvation of souls to be filled with holy zeal. We warn parents and employers that they are bound to set in their own persons an example of temperance to those who are subject to them, and to watch, lest through their own negligence those intrusted to their charge should fall victims to drink. We exhort artisans and other members of the working classes to join some one of the pious confraternities approved of by the Church, in which, if they be faithful to the observance o their rules, they will find a school of Christian self-denial. We bless from our hearts those zealous ecclesiastics and others who, in accordance with the spirit of the Church, devote their time and energies to forwarding the cause of temperance; and we would remind all that, however valuable other helps may be, there exists but one unfailing source whence human weakness can draw strength to resist temptation and break the bonds of evil habits. That source is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the overflowing fountain of mercy, from which, through prayer and the Sacraments, we receive grace and seasonable aid. The habit of daily prayer faithfully persevered in, the devout hearing of the

Word of God, and the avoiding of dangerous occasions, are the only sure means by which intemperance can be overcome.'[1]

I shall conclude this chapter by quoting two more appropriate extracts from Fr. Bridgett's book, 'The Discipline of Drink.'

11. (1) The words of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster (Manning): 'Now, my dear friends, listen! I will go to my grave without tasting intoxicating liquors; but I repeat distinctly that any man who should say that the use of wine or any other like thing is sinful when it does not lead to drunkenness—that man is a heretic condemned by the Catholic Church. With that man I will never work. Now, I desire to promote total abstinence in every way that I can; I will encourage all societies of total abstainers. But the moment I see men not charitable attempting to trample down those who do not belong to the total abstainers—from that moment I will not work with those men.

'I would have two kinds of pledge: one for the mortified who never taste drink, and the other for the temperate who never abuse it. If I can make these two classes work together, I will work in the midst of them. If I cannot get them to work together, I will work with both of them separately.'

(2) Words of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland. The Bishops of Ireland, in their public meeting of October, 1873, unanimously passed the following resolution: 'That we earnestly call upon all our clergy throughout Ireland to exert all their vigilance and zeal in repressing drunkenness, which is one of the greatest evils of the day, demoralizing and impoverishing the people, and destroying in thousands

[1] Pastoral Address of the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland at the close of the National Synod of Maynooth, September 20, 1875.

the souls which Christ died to save. Amongst the means which may be usefully employed, we recommend the Association of Prayer, and the establishment in every parish of temperance societies, based upon the principles of the Catholic religion.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

CHAPTER I.

1. The order in which this commandment is given.
2. The extent of this commandment.
3. Dominion or proprietorship : its signification.
4. Those who are capable of dominion.
5. The object of dominion. The internal things to which a man has a right: (1) His acts. (2) His justification and good name. (3) Over the members of his body, and over his life as to its preservation.
6. What external things can come under man's dominion. All sublunary things: (1) Corporeal and incorporeal. (2) Movable and immovable. (3) The productions of the mind in literature.
7. The origin of dominion.
8. The division of things lawful and approved by God.
9. The principal advantages following from the institution of private property, enumerated by Paley.
10. Division of things first introduced by the agreement of men and by the law of nations, but founded on the law of nature, which forbids quarrels, fighting, theft, and the like.

Thou shalt not steal (Exod. xx. 15).

1. As our life here on earth is short and precarious, God in a certain measure has provided for its peace and tranquillity. By the fifth commandment He ordains the preservation of our lives and our persons against the violence and wickedness of enemies; by the sixth commandment He makes provision for the preservation of the sanctity of married life and of chastity in general; in the seventh commandment He ordains that our property and fortune shall be guarded against all usurpation and all injustice at

the hands of others. He follows the order and economy of His wise providence in these commandments. (1) He ordains what is necessary for the preservation of our lives. (2) He commands the preservation of virtue and honour in regard to marriage and chastity. (3) He makes known His will and commandment in regard to the rights of property.

The natural law which tells us not to do to others what we would not have others do unto us forbids theft and injustice of every kind; but the law of nature became obscure through the malice of men, and God made its precepts more explicit in His commandments, by reminding us that theft and robbery are not only opposed to the natural law of justice, but also against charity, which obliges us to wish good to all men, and to promote that good whenever we can do so to the prevention of wrong, or of injury to our neighbour.

2. This commandment embraces more than is generally supposed. It extends not only to all that concerns theft, but to all other injustices that affect individuals and society. The class of the poor and miserable, and all that affects their state, come under its consideration; and also the rich and the prosperous are to be regulated by it, so that, in the world, that state of things may be rectified which was represented by the prophet Isaias: *All have turned aside into their own way, every one after his own gain, from the first even to the last.*[1]

In the explanation of this commandment, which prescribes respect for the goods and property of others, it will be necessary, in the first place, to consider what is meant by dominion and the rights of property, and to this I shall devote this chapter. In it I shall have to explain: (1) What is meant by dominion or proprietorship; (2) who are capable of dominion over temporal things; (3) the objec

[1] Isa. lvi. 11.

of human dominion ; (4) its origin ; (5) the different ways in which dominion may be acquired.

The order of God in the first pages of the Book of Genesis, as given to all men in the person of our first father, is, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken* [1]

3. *Dominion.* which may be called also proprietorship, is the right of disposing of anything as one's own, to any use not prohibited by law or contract—the right, on the one side, to things, and the corresponding obligation on the part of others to respect that right. It is the right of disposing of a thing by selling, or exchanging or giving it away, etc. It must be one's own property, to exclude the power of stewards or procurators, who can dispose of things, but not as belonging to themselves. Law or agreement may sometimes interfere and restrict the manner of disposing of things, so that the selling or giving may be either invalid or unlawful.

Dominion, as here described, is that which belongs to private persons and private property, not to the dominion which kings and rulers may possess as to the disposal even of private property for the public good. This latter is not dominion properly speaking, and, according to the constitutions of most civilized nations, no one can be deprived of his property except for the sake of public utility, and just indemnity according to the value of the property must be made to the owner.

4. *Those who are capable of Dominion.*—All rational beings are capable of dominion and of having property. The foundation of dominion is reason, or an intelligent nature, because it is only by this that one can have the power of disposing of his property.

The foundation of dominion does not, therefore, consist

[1] Gen. iii. 19.

(1) in charity, so that a man by mortal sin would lose dominion and jurisdiction. Wycliffe taught this doctrine, and was condemned in the Council of Constance. (2) Neither does it consist in faith, for Christ has said: *The kings of the gentiles lord it over them, and they that have power over them are called beneficent.*[1] (3) Neither is the actual use of reason required, according to the words of St. Paul: *As long as the heir is a child he differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all.*[2] Infants, therefore, and those like them, who have not the use of reason, cannot *actually* dispose of things; they can do so *radicaliter*—that is, by reason of the power or faculties of intellect and will which they possess, and which are sufficient for dominion, as otherwise we should have to say that a man asleep or intoxicated would lose his dominion, or would not be able to retain it. It is true that, to acquire goods of fortune and new property, some external act of acceptance is required, but the law of nature has ordained that children can acquire and possess certain things without any act of acceptance on their part, or the acceptance may be made in their name by parents or guardians. It therefore follows that only God, Angels, and men can have dominion or possess the right of disposing of things as their own. Not only can individuals have dominion, but our laws recognise moral persons capable of dominion, and give them a civil personification—as, for example, corporations, companies, etc. 'A corporation consists of one or more individuals, created by royal charter, Act of Parliament, or prescription, and inheriting in its corporate capacity certain properties, rights, and immunities which it may transmit in perpetuity to its successor; the main object of such institution being security of possession and uninterrupted succession, a kind of artificial person is created, not liable to the ordinary casualties which affect the

[1] St. Luke xxii. 25. [2] Gal. iv. 1

transmission of private rights, but capable, by its constitution, of indefinitely continuing its own existence.'

'Corporations are either sole or aggregate—that is, consisting of one or many. The Queen, a Bishop, some deans, parson or vicar, is a corporation sole, being perpetual in their successor. Corporations aggregate are commonly the Mayor and burgesses of a town; the Head and Fellows of a college; the Dean and Chapter of a cathedral church. A name is essential to a corporation, by which it may be known, and do all legal acts.'[1]

The powers usually annexed to corporate bodies are: (1) To have, by descent, election or otherwise, perpetual succession; (2) to sue and be sued, and do all other acts which individuals may do, in their corporate capacity; (3) to purchase lands, and have a common seal; (4) to make by-laws for the better government of the corporation. These in general are the subject of dominion, or those who are capable of the rights of property.

There are particular laws in different countries as to the dominion of wives, married women's property, the dominion of children and minors, and their rights over property; the dominion of religious bodies and their rights of property; the dominion and the rights of secular clergy over their property, that which is known as ecclesiastical property as well as their own personal patrimony. It is not necessary to go into these matters in detail, as it would require a separate treatise of Canon Law and Civil Law to deal with all the particulars concerning these several rights as affecting both Church and State as well as individuals.

5. *The Object of Dominion.*—The object of human dominion embraces all those things which come under the power of man. Some of these things to which a man has

[1] 'The Cabinet Lawyer': 'Corporations.'

a right are: (1) His acts; (2) his good name or reputation; (3) his members and life as to their preservation.

(1) A man has dominion over all his free acts, even the internal ones, and even though they be supernatural, because all these are within his power; this is not the case with regard to necessary actions, except those that are done deliberately, which may be said in a sense to be under his dominion or power.

(2) A man has dominion over his reputation or the right of a good name. It is principally by his own acts and labour that it can be acquired and increased, and he can claim its restitution if injured or taken away. This right may, however, through a man's own fault, be forfeited.

(3) A man has dominion over the use of his members, and the right to life. He has not, however, what is called direct dominion over his own life or the life of another, so that he can injure or destroy it. God has reserved that right to Himself. He has, however, the use of his soul and body. His life is in the hands of God; but as far as other men are concerned, he has a right to that life, and no one can injure it or take it away from him. This right may, however, be forfeited, as, for example, if a man kill another, he forfeits his own life, and the supreme power in the State can condemn him to death.

It is not of any of these rights that we have to treat here, as they come under other commandments; viz., *Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour*, but what we have to consider is the question, What external things come under the dominion of man?

6. As a general answer to this question, we may say that all sublunary things can come under man's dominion. These are: (1) Corporeal or incorporeal; (2) movable or immovable. By *corporeal* things I mean those things that

can be touched and come under the senses. Incorporeal are those that are only perceived by the mind and intellect, and consist in rights, such as obligations arising from service, labour, the right to inheritance and to possessions, etc.

(1) Movable things are those which can be changed and transferred from one place to another, either by their own motion, such as animate, or by external force, such as inanimate things.

(2) Immovable things are those which cannot be transferred from place to place, such as land, houses, etc.

(3) Apart from these, we may consider the productions of the mind in literature, over which an author may have full dominion, and hence the rights of authorship.

Having given this outline of the object of dominion, or those things over which a man may claim rights, the further question arises in regard to external things, corporeal and incorporeal, movable and immovable, as to the origin of man's right of dominion over them.

7. *The Origin of Dominion.* — We have to note that some rights are given to man by the law of nature; namely, to live, to grow, and to a good name. Some other things, such as the above external things, which are called temporal things and the goods of fortune, are not given to any particular man by the law of nature.

In the beginning of the world all external things were in common, and that would have remained so had man persevered in a state of innocence; after the fall into sin, things held in common began to be divided, and some people began to have their own, that is, the goods which they appropriated.

For this appropriation occupation alone sufficed, b cause by the law of nature the occupation of one took away from others the power or right to occupy or come into possession

of the same thing; and, besides, there seems to have been some convention by which it was agreed that whatever one might possess or occupy should not be taken away from him by others. Since, however, every human convention or agreement excepts extreme necessity, it follows that in such a necessity the original right returns, and all things become common property, in so far as that necessity demands.

8. This division of things was lawful, as appears from the fact that God approved of it. He increased the possessions of the patriarchs; and the Sacred Scriptures commands us to give alms to the poor, to pay our lawful debts, not to steal, etc.—all which things suppose and approve the lawful division of things and the exclusive right to property and possessions.

9. This division of things was very convenient and necessary after the fall. The principal advantages to account for the institution of private property are clearly stated and illustrated in Paley's 'Moral and Political Philosophy':[1]

'1. It increases the produce of the earth. The earth in climates like ours produces little without cultivation; and none would be found willing to cultivate the ground, if others were to be admitted to an equal share of the produce. The same is true of the care of flocks and herds of tame animals.

'Crabs and acorns, red deer, rabbits, game, and fish, are all which we should have to subsist upon in this country, if we trusted to the spontaneous productions of the soil. And it fares not much better with other countries.

'2. It preserves the produce of the earth to maturity. We may judge what would be the effects of a community of right to the productions of the earth, from the trifling specimens which we see of it at present. A cherry-tree in a

[1] Bk. III., ch. xi.

hedgerow, nuts in a wood, the grass of an unstinted pasture, are seldom of much advantage to anybody, because people do not wait for the proper season of reaping them. Corn, if any were sown, would never ripen, lambs and calves would never grow up to sheep and cows, because the first person that met them would reflect that he had better take them as they are than leave them for another.

'3. It prevents contests. War and waste, tumult and confusion, must be unavoidable and everlasting where there is not enough for all, and where there are no rules to adjust the division.

'4. It improves the conveniency of living. This it does in two ways: (1) It enables mankind to divide themselves into distinct professions, which is impossible unless a man can exchange the productions of his own art for what he wants from others; and exchange implies property. . . . When a man is from necessity his own tailor, tent-maker, carpenter, cook, huntsman, and fisherman, it is not probable that he will be expert at any of his callings. (2) It likewise encourages those arts by which the accommodations of human life are protected, by appropriating to the artist the benefit of his discoveries and improvements, without which appropriation ingenuity will never be exerted with effect.'

10. From what I have said, it follows that the division of things is founded on the law of nature, and has been introduced by the convention or agreement of men, and by the law of nations, and, furthermore, is sanctioned by that natural law which forbids quarrels, fighting, theft, and the like.

Leo XII., in his Encyclical *Rerum novarum*, May 15, 1891, speaking of the rights of property, says that every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. This he proves first with regard to man considered individually: (1) from the superiority of man over animal

creation, which superiority consists especially in our reason, (2) from the fact that man, governing himself by the foresight of his counsel, exercises his choice on things which regard not only his present, but also his future welfare, (3) from the cultivation of the earth, by which man makes his own that portion of nature's field which he cultivates; (4) from authority, viz., the common consent of mankind, the civil laws, and the Divine law. Next, the Holy Father goes on to show this same natural right as to permanent private property with regard to man, considered in his social and domestic life, viz., from his duties and rights in his capacity of head of a family. It has been objected that, according to the natural law, all things are common, and to this we may reply: God has granted the earth to mankind in general—not in the sense that all, without distinction, can deal with it as they please, but, rather, that no part of it has been assigned to anyone in particular, and that the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry and the law of individual people. We may also answer, with St. Thomas: By natural rights, previously to any supposition as to the state of mankind, all things are common—*communitate negativa*, as he says, but not *communitate positiva*. It has also been asserted that all men are equal in nature and in rights, and this can only be admitted in the sense that all are equal as to their specific nature, but not as to their individual nature.

It may be said in general that man received from God the right to property—that is, the right to make something his own and to dispose of it to his own advantage.

God guarantees this right by the seventh and the tenth commandments, by which robbery, fraud, and injury, and the desires for, such things, are forbidden.

The right of property, which is guaranteed by the seventh commandment of God, is attacked by the enemies of the

Divine order of things, who take the name of *Communists*, *Socialists*, and *Collectivists*, etc. These are divided amongst themselves as to the means of reorganizing the new society which they seek to establish, but they are united on one point, namely, to abolish individual and hereditary property, and to cause all goods to return to society, or to the community, which alone is the true proprietor. In this way they imagine that all things will be equally divided, and there will be no distinction between rich and poor.

This doctrine is (1) worthy of the passions which inspire it, for it has its source in the contempt of heavenly things, and in cupidity and envy. (2) It is chimerical, and therefore incapable of being realized, for to bring about equality in all things it would be necessary to have all men equally strong, equally robust, laborious, economical, and intelligent. (3) It would be most disastrous in its results, for each person would do as little as possible when he would have no hope of enjoying the fruits of his labours, and failure of work through negligence and sloth would bring about universal misery. This teaching of modern socialistic schools proclaims the equality of men in all things. This Utopia of theirs is only invented to favour their own ends, to open the way to the pillage of property when they obtain the mastery, and to confiscate ecclesiastical property which is destined for the Divine worship, for Christian schools, and for the relief of the poor and infirm.[1]

As to the time in which the division of goods began, it may be stated that there was some division of goods before the Flood. It is said in Genesis *that Cain offered, of the fruits of the earth, gifts to the Lord. Abel also offered of the firstlings of his flock*[2]—which clearly signifies a division of property almost from the very beginning.

[1] 'Exposition Elementaire de la Doctrine Catholique,' par l'Abbé A. R. Moulin, *in loco.* [2] Gen. iv. 3, 4.

The most celebrated division, however, took place after the building of the tower of Babel: *And so the Lord scattered them from that place into all lands, and they ceased to build the city.*[1]

The right of property is the one great right which raises civilized men above savages. It is an acquired right, and means that every man has a right to hold his own and to freely use temporal possessions, so far as he has received or acquired them without detriment to the rights of others, and without interference with his own duties to others.

We must not, however, when treating on this subject of property, omit to call attention to another view of the question affected by the rights of property. That is the case of the wealthy, who have too much, and who fail in the duties of charity and justice towards their fellow-creatures. Not only has man by nature the right to possess property as his own, but he is bound by the very duty of nature to a division of permanent property—in other words, the division of property is necessary; that is, by a moral necessity, originating in the present order of things in our state of fallen human nature. The Pope, in his Encyclical in answer to the question, 'How must one's possessions be used?' replies in the words of St. Thomas: 'Man should not consider his outward possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without hesitation when others are in need, whence the Apostle saith, *Commend the rich of this world to offer with no stint, to apportion largely.*' The Encyclical then goes on to say: 'True, no one is commanded to distribute to others that which is required for his own needs and those of his household; nor even to give away that which is reasonably required to keep up becomingly his condition in life; *for no one ought to live other than becomingly.* But when what necessity demands

[1] Gen. xi. 8.

has been supplied, and one's standing fairly taken thought of, it becomes a duty to give to the indigent of what remains over. *Of that which remaineth give alms.*[1] Whoever has received from the Divine bounty a large share of temporal blessings, whether they be external and corporeal, or gifts of the mind, has received them for the purpose of using them for the perfecting of his own nature, and, at the same time, that he may employ them as the steward of God's providence for the benefit of others. "He that hath a talent," says St. Gregory the Great, "let him see that he hide it not; he that hath abundance, let him quicken himself to mercy and generosity; he that hath art and skill, let him do his best to share the use and utility thereof with his neighbour"' (see Encyclical, May 15, 1891).

We shall treat in the following chapter of the various ways in which dominion over property may be acquired.

[1] St. Luke xi. 41

CHAPTER II.

THE VARIOUS WAYS OF ACQUIRING DOMINION.

1. In order to explain the various ways of acquiring dominion, temporal things may be divided into those that have no owner and those that have.

2. Things that belong to no one enumerated: (1) Things derelict. (2) Vacant goods or effects. (3) Things found. (4) Treasures. (5) Wild animals. The three classes of animals.

3. Dominion acquired over things already owned. Contracts: (1) The meaning of a contract, and the several ways of effecting it. (2) Division of contracts, and their several kinds in English law. (3) The conditions required for valid contracts enumerated and explained. (4) The effects of contracts.

1. THE various ways in which dominion or proprietorship may be obtained over temporal things, such as land, houses, movables or immovables, may be multiplied without number. I have therefore to confine my investigation to a few of the principal means of acquiring a right to property. Things either have no owner, and in this case they may be acquired by occupation or invention—that is, the finding of them—or they have an owner, and in this case a right of dominion or proprietorship may be obtained over them either by contract or by prescription.

2. Amongst the things that belong to no one we may class the following: (1) Goods derelict; (2) vacant goods or effects; (3) things found; (4) treasures; (5) wild animals. Let us consider each of these separately.

(1) *Things Derelict* (*Bona Derelicta*).— A thing may be said to be derelict in law, or abandoned, when the owner no longer wishes to regard it as his own or to have it as his property There are few things of this description, and hence, in cases of doubt, we must presume that goods of this kind have an owner. Even in cases of shipwreck, property thrown overboard is not to be regarded as abandoned, for the owner has still the mind or intention to retain his right over it as far as possible, and to claim it if it be recovered—in the same way as he may claim his right over sheep rescued from the jaws of the wolf, or over a house rescued from the flames. Things that are certainly abandoned by the owners by the law of nations belong to the first occupant. The civil law in some nations gives them over to the State. With regard to wreck on the seashore, we have to attend to the special laws that regulate these goods in each country, and if there are no laws prescribed, then these goods may be disposed of according to usage or custom.

(2) *Vacant Goods or Effects* (*Bona Vacantia*).— By vacant goods or property is to be understood, in law, those things left by a person dying intestate and without leaving any heirs to inherit his property according to the laws and rights of succession. These things, by the law of nations, may be acquired by the first occupant; but by the civil law they are claimed by the State. Illegitimate children have not the right of succession to the property of parents, nor can parents succeed to their property in cases of death without a will.

(3) *Things Found.*—This question regards those things recently and involuntarily lost, and the question who has the right to them when found.

It is certain, in the first place, that if the thing found be valuable the finder is bound by charity, and it would seem

also by justice, to institute diligent inquiries as to the owner, and this obligation is greater according to the greater value of the thing.

Secondly, it is quite certain that, when the owner is found, the thing, or its equivalent, has to be given up to him. The thing itself if it exist, or if not, then its equivalent or the price of it; or that in which the finder has become richer in case he consumed or used up the thing, and thus has saved his own purse.

Thirdly, it is certain that all the expenses incurred in finding the owner, and in preserving his property for him, may be deducted, and also the finder has a right to any reward that may be promised for the recovery of the thing. There is no second opinion about these three points, but the question arises as to the case when, after diligent inquiry and a reasonable time elapses without finding the owner, to whom does the found property belong? In answer to this we have two opinions. The older opinion maintains that the thing should be disposed of according to the presumed wish of the person who lost it, and that, therefore, it should be expended on the poor, or devoted to some pious purpose. This opinion is that expressed in the Catechism of the Council of Trent.[1]

The other opinion, held by many grave authors, maintains that in the case mentioned the property belongs to the finder. He is not bound to give it to the poor or to pious purposes, either by the law of nature or by any positive law either civil or ecclesiastical.

The will of the owner cannot easily be known. A person losing his purse would probably like it to remain in the hands of an honest man. Many would not think about the poor, or wish to impose this obligation on the finder of their purse or money, and, if asked, they would probably

[1] The Seventh Commandment, No. 17.

say they cared little what became of it as long as they could not find it, or that 'the money will benefit someone else.' Besides, people would not care to find things, or secure them from total loss, if such an accident as that of finding a purse were only to impose upon them an obligation in conscience to search for the owner, and, failing to discover him to give the whole thing to the poor. Conscientious people in such a case would be strongly tempted to pass by, and then the owner of such things would suffer many a heavy loss.

We may, therefore, say that people in general, relying upon a mutual understanding, may in good faith retain what they find lost as long as they do not know the right owner. In many cases it may be advisable to dispose of such things to the poor or in behalf of some pious work, but this cannot be imposed on anyone as an obligation.

(4) *Treasures.*—By treasures we mean money or wealth found hid in the earth, of which no owner appears.

According to the law of nations, this belongs entirely to the finder, because, according to this law, those things that belong to no one became the property of the first occupant. In English law this is called *treasure trove*, and belongs to the revenues of the Crown. And, according to the same law of nations, treasures as gold, diamonds, money, and other valuables found in the sea or upon the earth, belong to the finder if no owner appears.

The concealing of *treasure trove* is, by English law punishable by fine and imprisonment.

According to the civil laws of some countries, such as France and Belgium, and also the old Roman law, a difference is made as to a treasure found in one's own property and that found in another man's. That found in one's own property belongs entirely to the finder; but if found in another man's property, half is to be given to the owner of

the land, and the other half to be retained by the finder. Other particulars are specified as to the disposal of a treasure which a man purposely goes to look for, and that which he accidentally discovers, but these are by way of protection, so that men may not trespass and dig up their neighbour's fields or hedges, or destroy property wantonly or under the delusion of finding hidden treasures.

(5) *Acquiring Dominion over Animals.*—There are three classes of animals to be considered in connection with ownership. Some are by nature tame and domestic, such as sheep, horses, cows, hens, dogs, etc. These belong to owners, like their houses and lands, and anyone stealing them or keeping them without the consent of the owner is guilty of theft, and this is the case even when they may stray away from their owner; and the owner is responsible for any damages these animals may do to the property of another.

Other animals are wild by nature, but by human agency may be tamed and domesticated, such as rabbits, pigeons, bees; and under this head we may include fishes in private ponds, deer in parks, wild animals in zoological gardens, etc. All these belong to their owners as long as they are tame and under their keeping. If they escape and recover their liberty they no longer belong to anyone, and they become the property of the first who catches them. Pigeons may roam about and still belong to an owner as long as they continue to return home; but when they cease to return then they become common property, liable to be appropriated by anyone who may secure them. In harvest-time, if found destroying crops, they may be shot or killed. Other animals are wild by nature, and are not usually tamed or enclosed, such as hares, lions, tigers, leopards, fishes in the seas, and birds in the air. These, as soon as they are captured by anyone, become his property accord-

ing to the law of nations. Before that they belong to no one, and therefore they fall under the general law of the first occupant, and it makes no difference as to whether they are captured on one's own property or on the property of another. In case they recover their liberty again—that is, when they escape from under the power of their captor—they may become the property of another, namely, of anyone who may again secure them. Besides the division of the classes of animals here given, we may mention game. Game is still of sufficient importance to be subject to special legislation different from property, or of other animals, either wild or domesticated. As defined by English law, it includes hares, pheasants, partridges, grouse, heath or moor game, black game, and bustards. I need not attempt to deal with these laws more than to state that they may be regarded as penal, except in so far as their violation would be against the law of nations, as above explained in connection with the ownership of animals.

3. Having considered those things that have no owner, and how ownership may be obtained over them, we have to treat of those things that are already owned by someone. Dominion or proprietorship may be obtained over these things either by *contract* or by *prescription.*

Contracts.—God, in placing men on earth, did not intend for them an isolated and lonely life, and that each should enjoy only the goods which he might himself be able to obtain. He ordained that they should have reciprocal necessities, and that they should have need of each other's help. Some have houses, some lands, some money; others have none of these things, but in their stead they have the power of labour and personal industry. Some, in the order of things, have much more than they need of some things, and are in want of many other necessary and useful objects. No one is quite sufficient for himself, and hence it is neces-

sary to have recourse to our fellow-beings for so many things that are necessary for life, for food, clothing, and shelter.

From this arises the necessity of exchange and the creation of commerce amongst men, which reproduces itself in so many different forms of contracts. It will not be possible to treat of particular contracts, and I shall have to confine myself to the general principles of contracts and their explanations, which when applied may serve to demonstrate the lawfulness or unlawfulness of any particular contract or business transaction.

Concerning contracts in general, we have to inquire:

(1) What is meant by a contract, and in how many ways may it be effected?

(2) How may contracts be divided?

(3) What conditions are required for the validity of a contract?

(4) What are the effects of a contract?

(1) A contract is the mutual consent of two or many in one agreement which begets an obligation in one or other or both of the parties concerned in it. In other words, it is an agreement or covenant between two or more persons, in which each party binds himself to do or forbear some act, and each acquires a right to what the other promises. It may also be called a bargain or a compact.

The consent of the parties is necessary in every contract, and is the efficient cause of the contract, but the consent alone is not always sufficient to execute a contract.

Some contracts may be made by the giving of a thing—*e.g.*, a deposit, and these are called *real;* others are made in written agreements, such as wills, deeds. These are generally required in law cases; very many are by the consent of the parties expressed or understood—buying and selling, etc.

(2) *Division of Contracts.*—Besides the above-mentioned

real and written, and contracts of consent, contracts may be either *nominate* or *innominate*. *Nominate* contracts in Scots law, which follows the division of the Roman law, are loan, commodate, deposit, sale, permutation, location, society, and mandate. Contracts not distinguished by special names are termed *innominate*, all of which are obligatory on the contracting parties from their date.

The several kinds of contracts in English law are thus exhibited by Paley in the order in which he considers them:

Contracts of
- Sale.
- Hazard.
- Lending of
  - Inconsumable property.
  - Money.
- Labour
  - Commissions.
  - Partnership.
  - Offices.

Contracts may also be *valid* or *invalid* or *revocable*, *absolute* or *conditional*, in the sense expressed by these words, and they need no definition in this place.

(3) The conditions required for a valid contract are:

(*a*) That the parties be competent.

(*b*) That the thing be subject to contract, and that the act contracted for be not contrary to law or public policy.

(*c*) That the contracting parties give their free consent.

(*d*) That the legal form be observed at least in substance.

According to the first of these conditions, the contracting party must have been of sound mind and of full age (twenty-one years), unless it was for the supply of necessaries, which can, however, be recovered at value, not at contracted price, if this be exorbitant. The following persons may be said in general to be incapable of contracting: minors, lunatics, wives, without the consent of their lawful superiors. Some contracts of minors are valid in the sense of the limitation given above, and wives who have their own

property, independent of their husbands or any marriage agreement, may contract in all the goods and effects that belong to them.

Under the second head, we may say that the matter of contract can include all and only those things that are allowed by the natural law, and are not forbidden by any positive law. Hence contracts are not binding when their observance is impossible, when they are unlawful, and when they are opposed to former obligations.

The consent necessary for a valid contract must be reciprocal, serious, and manifested externally, and it must be *free*. There must be neither fraud by concealment or misstatement, nor compulsion on either side ; and fraudulent acts subsequent to the agreement, having reference to it, are sufficient to deprive the party guilty of them of all right under it.

Intoxication was formerly held not to constitute an exemption from liability upon a contract made while in that state, but it is now held that a contract is void in all cases where the person at the time of making it was incapable of understanding the nature and extent of the instrument, no matter what may have caused such incapability.

The principal things which interfere with the liberty required for the necessary consent are error, fraud, violence, and fear. These things render contracts null and void, or at least revocable. By error invalidating a contract, we mean that which proceeds from a mistake as to the substance of the thing. A mere accidental error as to the quality or some slight mistake would not annul the contract. Violence annuls a contract ; *e.g.*, a robber attacks you, and you promise that if he will spare your life he shall have a purse of money next day. No obligation attaches to such a promise. Fraud that is antecedent to a contract, and is

the cause of it, so that it would never have been made only for the deception practised, annuls the contract. Again, grave fear, which must be considered relatively to the persons suffering it, taking into account age, sex, etc., if unjustly caused, is sufficient to annul a contract. This does not apply to fear which is purely reverential, as in the case of children in respect to parents.

By the legal form to be observed in contracts, I mean the formalities and solemnities which are required by the positive law for a valid contract. Some of these are substantial or essential to the validity of a contract, and some formalities are accidental—that is, required for the lawfulness of the contract. These may be known from the tenor of the law, from custom, or the common interpretation of jurists.

'By statute law a promise must be in writing, and signed by the party to be sued: (1) when it was not to be performed within a year of the date of the contract; (2) when offered as security for a third party; (3) when it is made in consideration of marriage, except mutual promise to marry; (4) in cases of sales of goods above a certain value (£10 in England, and 50 dollars in the United States); and (5) when the contract is for the sale of lands or interest in lands, or for a lease extending over more than a year.'[1]

The question arises whether contracts, where the formalities required by the civil law for their validity are not observed, bind in conscience. Some moralists teach that contracts in which the formalities of the civil law are not observed do not bind in conscience, especially in civil matters that come under the law of the land. They maintain that the civil power can invalidate such contracts and declare them invalid, and this may be necessary often for the general good, and to prevent fraud and undue influence. Others, on the contrary, hold an opposite

[1] 'The Popular Encyclopædia.'

opinion, that if the will of the parties be clearly and certainly known, the agreement is to be regarded as binding in conscience, because the contracting parties have the power and the will to contract, and no legislator or civil authority intends to deprive them of that power by legal formalities

There is a third opinion which says that these contracts are partly valid and partly invalid, and that they are to be acted upon as valid until declared null and void by judicial authority. This is the usual practice, and that which is received as the best interpretation of the law, and quite sufficient to satisfy any doubt or perplexity of conscience. We may hold the right of the person in possession in such cases until the contrary be judicially declared.

I do not wish to imply by this that a man has a right to keep and take everything which the law of the land will allow him to keep and to take. This law cannot authorize anything that is against natural right and justice, and without falling under its authority, or even sometimes shielded by its authority, a man may be guilty of the most flagitious chicanery ; thus, a man might escape paying a lawful debt, of whose justice he is conscious, if a creditor neglect to demand it for a certain number of years, and a young man might, under the privilege of the law of minority, avoid a fair obligation or an equitable contract. The law of the land will therefore justify us in availing ourselves of the protection of its formalities in so far as these are in accordance with equity and natural justice ; but we cannot extend this protection to things that are opposed to right, reason, and common-sense.

(4) *The Effects of Contracts.*—These are chiefly two—*obligation* and *action*. *Action* in law is a suit or process by which a demand is made of a right, or a claim before a tribunal. Actions are *real*, *personal* or *mixed*—*real* or *feudal* when the demandant claims a title to real estate,

personal when a man demands a debt, personal duty, or damages in lieu of it, or satisfaction for an injury to person or property; and *mixed* when real estate is demanded with damages for a wrong sustained. An obligation is a legal tie by which one is bound to pay or perform something to or for another.

Obligations are of three kinds—*natural*, *civil*, and *mixed*. *Natural* obligations are entirely founded on natural equity; *civil* obligations rest on civil authority alone, without any necessary foundation in natural equity; and *mixed* obligations are those which, being founded on natural equity, are besides enforced by civil authority. Obligations according to *civil law* are said to arise in four ways: out of contracts, quasi-contracts, delicts, or quasi-delicts. A *principal obligation* is that by which a debtor is bound to his creditor; an *accessory obligation* that by which one is bound to another to satisfy the contract of a third party.

Some obligations are *conditional*, and a moral question arises, with regard to these, as to whether a contract entered into under an unlawful condition is binding, or a contract to do something wrong. As long as the unlawful condition is not complied with, the contract is certainly not binding. And, therefore, he who receives payment to do a wrong thing, *e.g.*, against the fifth or sixth commandment, before the deed is done cannot retain the payment or execute the promise. If the deed be accomplished, the sinner can retain what he has received as a reward for it, and the person promising is bound to pay him by reason of the conditional contract. Thus, public sinners who gain a livelihood by their sinful or unlawful occupations are not to be accused of injustice by reason of the payment they receive, nor are they to be obliged to make restitution, unless, as it is understood, their sins be against the virtue of justice.

CHAPTER III.

PRESCRIPTION.

1. Prescription: its meaning and division.
2. Its conditions. (1) The thing must be prescriptible. (2) Its possession. (3) Time required by law.
3. Prescription a lawful means of acquiring a right, and freeing one's self from an obligation.
4. *Bonâ-fides* or good faith always required.

1. PRESCRIPTION is a right or title acquired by use or time, as when a man can show no other title to what he claims than that he and those under whom he claims have been immemorially used to enjoy it.

A prescription is distinguished from custom by this—that a custom is properly a local usage and not annexed to a person, such as a custom in a manor that land shall descend to the younger son; but prescription is merely a personal usage, as that a certain man and his ancestors, or those whose estate he hath, have used, time out of mind, to have common of pasture in such a close; for this is a usage annexed to the person of an estate.[1]

Prescription is twofold: (1) *Positive*, as when the title to lands is acquired by uninterrupted possession for forty years; (2) *Negative*, which is the loss or omission of a right by neglecting to use it during the time limited by law. Obliga-

[1] 'Nat. Encycl.'

tions are lost by prescription or neglect of prosecution for the time designated by law.

Prescription has been introduced by civil law and sanctioned by the canon law; hence, in forming a judgment of the validity of prescriptive right, we may be guided by the civil law, from which prescription obtains its binding force.

The object of prescription is to secure the title to property to him who has had the possession of it for the term fixed by law, and to prevent anyone from disturbing his possession after such term has expired. The law of prescription is not intended to punish the indolence of proprietors; it only interprets their silence as consent, presuming that a man who neglects to assert his rights for a long series of years gives them up.

2. For prescription many conditions are required. (1) The thing or object must be prescriptible. Some things or obligations are not capable of prescription, such as those things that are of the divine and natural law, or which belong to public order. These of their own nature are imprescriptible. The use and enjoyment of navigation and fishery in the sea for any length of time does not create a title by prescription. The common right of nations to the use and enjoyment of the sea is imprescriptible. (2) A possession is required continuous, not interrupted, peaceful, public and not equivocal, and under the title of proprietorship, not merely as tenant, agent or depository. And this possession must be (3) for the time required by law. 'By the law of England a prescription must have existed from time whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary, which is to be understood not merely of living memory, but of memory by means of records or other written memorials, and, therefore, where there is any proof of the original and commencement of anything, it cannot be claimed by prescription, unless,

indeed, the commencement were before the reign of Richard I., for then it is considered to have existed immemorially, on an equitable construction of the Statute of Westminster, 1, which limited that time for a writ of right. This continued to be the rule at common law till the passing of the statute 2 and 3 William IV., cap. lxxi., which provides that no right of common shall be defeated after thirty years' enjoyment, and after sixty years the right is deemed absolute and indefeasible, unless had by consent or agreement. In claims of right of way, of watercourse and similar easements the periods are twenty and forty years. Claims to the use of right to any dwelling-house or building enjoyed for twenty years are indefeasible unless shown to have been by consent.'

'By the law of Scotland prescription has a much wider operation than by the law of England, supplying the place of the statute of limitations of that system. It not only protects individuals from actions which other parties might have brought against them had the lapse of time not taken place, but in some instances creates a positive title to property. The prescription by which a right of property can be established is that of forty years. Whatever adverse right is not cut off by the other special prescriptions of shorter periods is destroyed by the long prescription, as this is called. To create a title to real property, the long prescription must be both positive and negative. The party holding the property must by himself, or those through whom he holds, have been forty years in unchallenged possession, and be able to show an enfeoffment or series of enfeoffments. The claimants and those whom he represents must have been forty years without an ostensible title, and must, by not legally challenging it, have tacitly acquiesced in the possessor's title. A period of twenty years is now sufficient for a prescription in certain cases. Prescription

is interrupted by an action raised in a competent court, and is suspended by the minority of any person who could challenge the opposing right; in the first case a new period of forty years has again to run, and in the second the years of the minority are not counted in making up the forty.

'The other and shorter prescriptions (called the lesser prescriptions) are as follows: The vicennial or twenty years' prescription, applicable to holograph writings not attested with the usual solemnities of Scottish writs; the decennial or ten years' prescription, applicable to actions against tutors and curators; the septennial or seven years' prescription, applicable to actions against cautioners; the sexennial or six years' prescription, applicable to bills of exchange or promissory notes; the quinquennial or five years' prescription cuts off all right of action on verbal contracts and arrears of rent in an agricultural lease; the triennial or three years' prescription, which cuts off claims for ordinary merchants' accounts, servants' wages, rent due on a verbal lease, and for services rendered by attorneys, surgeons, artificers, etc. By Scotch law also, but not by English, a vicennial prescription applies to crimes, no prosecution being competent after a period of twenty years.'[1]

3. Having explained the nature of prescriptions and the conditions required for them, we have now to examine the question whether it is a lawful means of acquiring a right and of freeing one's self from an obligation not only according to the civil law, but also before God and in conscience. Theologians unanimously answer in the affirmative, provided the prescription itself be lawful and be accompanied by the conditions required for it. Hence, a man can retain a thing which has been prescribed according to law even though he may afterwards find out that it was the property of another; and a man, after the time for prescription has

[1] 'Popular Encycl.'

elapsed, may regard himself free from any obligation in conscience as to a debt even though afterwards he find out that in reality it was never paid.

The reason of this is, because the State can dispose of the effects of its subject whenever the public or common good requires it, and this it does by the law of prescription; and it places this as one of the legitimate means of acquiring dominion and of removing an obligation. And the canon law, which chiefly is concerned with the good of souls, clearly approves of prescription, and treats of it as a just right and title. That we may understand the equity of prescription, we should consider it not only in its bearing on a particular case, but in general, and then we can see that it injures the rights of no one, and under it each one may have equally the fear of losing or the hope of gaining.

4. The prescription of which I speak supposes *bonâ fides*, that is, with good faith, without fraud or deception. In law, an act done *bonâ fide* is one done with good faith, without fraud, knowledge or notice of any deceit or impropriety, and in contradistinction to an act done colourably, deceitfully, with bad faith, fraudulently, with knowledge of previous facts, rendering the act to be set up invalid. A *bonâ fide* possessor is a person who possesses a subject upon a title which he honestly believes to be good.

Having explained the rights of property and the principal ways of acquiring ownership over temporal goods, we have now to examine how those rights may be attacked, and this introduces us to the clear exposition of the seventh commandment, whose immediate object is respect for the goods and property of another.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*)

CHAPTER IV.

THEFT AND ROBBERY.

1. The signification of the words 'theft' and 'robbery.'
2. Theft and robbery are grave sins of their own nature.
3. The amount required in theft to constitute a grave sin.
4. When a theft of a thing in itself trivial may be a grave sin.
5. Reasons that excuse from the guilt of theft: (1) Extreme necessity. (2) Occult compensation—when lawful.
6. Some special modifications with regard to the thefts of wives and children.
7. Sacrilegious thefts and the usurpation of ecclesiastical property.

THE seventh commandment is: 'Thou shalt not steal.'

1. *Theft and Robbery.*—Theft is the unjust taking away or keeping what belongs to another.

It may be simple theft, or may be accompanied with aggravating circumstances, as, for example, when it is committed upon the person, or in the dwelling-house. Stealing from the person may amount to robbery if attended with violence; if from the house, to burglary or housebreaking, according as it is perpetrated in the night, or the entry or exit of the offender has been effected by any degree of violence.

It is said in the definition that the taking must be *unjust*, that is, against the will of the owner, either in his presence, or clandestinely, or by force, surprise, fraud, or trick. It is the *unjust taking and carrying away*, that is, there must be

the *fraudulent intent* at the time, in the offender, to convert the property to his own use. Or it is the *unjust keeping*. Thus, a person may lawfully obtain possession of goods and become guilty of stealing by embezzling them or applying them to his own use. Thus, if a master deliver property into the hands of a servant for a special purpose, as to leave it at the house of a friend, or to get change, or deposit with a banker, the servant will be guilty of theft in applying it to his own use

The crime of robbery is a species of theft, aggravated by the circumstance of a taking of the property from the person by violence. To constitute robbery there must be a *forcible* taking, but any degree of force which inspires fear is sufficient. It must be taken from the person, as a horse whereon a man is riding, or money out of his pocket; or else openly and before his face, as if a thief, having first assaulted me, takes away my horse that is standing by me, or, having put me in fear, drives away my cattle. Actual violence to the person, or exciting fear in the mind, is not always necessary to constitute a robbery. For if a man with a cutlass under his arm, or pistol, demand and obtain the money of another without touching the person, it is robbery, though there is no consciousness of fear in the party robbed, only an apprehension or expectation that violence will be resorted to if the robber be refused or resisted.

If violence be used it is sufficient to constitute robbery, although it be used under the colour of executing legal process or other lawful authority.[1]

Thefts and robberies may be committed in various ways, *e.g.*, stealing in a dwelling-house, stealing by tenants or

[1] See 'Cabinet Lawyer.' I have taken its definition and explanation of these crimes as understood in English law, which so far interprets the natural law.

lodgers, stealing in a church or chapel, stealing by clerks and servants, stealing goods in process of manufacture, stealing horses, cattle or sheep, dogs or birds, trees or shrubs; stealing from gardens or orchards—all which thefts are contrary to the law of God and punishable by the civil law.

2. Theft and robbery are grave sins of their own nature. St. Paul, in enumerating those sins that exclude from the kingdom of heaven, expressly mentions thieves and robbers: *Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Do not err: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God.*[1] This manner of expression in sacred Scripture, according to the rule of theologians, imports a mortal sin, because venial sins do not exclude from the kingdom of God.

This sin, in effect, contains a twofold injury: against God, and against our neighbour. It is an injury against God, whose power and dominion the thief usurps in appropriating to himself the goods which the Sovereign Distributor has assigned to others. A man, by his industry, his labours, and his trouble, acquires the goods which he possesses, and God assigns them to him. It is the workman who earns the wages, but it is the master who gives it, and the dominion of God extends over all earthly things as much as does that of a rich man over his money, and the administration and possession of them should be carried out according to the laws of His justice and mercy. Therefore, when a man steals or robs another he injures the work of God, and reverses the just equilibrium which He has established, and destroys His just recompense.

The thief does an injury to his neighbour by depriving

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

him of that which, perhaps, he has acquired by long labour and through much suffering. It is not only an injury to his neighbour, but it is an injustice committed against him, for every man has a right to enjoy and possess in peace that which belongs to him.

These reasons suffice to make us apprehend the nature of the sins of theft and robbery.

Theft and robbery are of their own nature mortal sins—that is, when the amount stolen or taken by force is considerable, the sin is grave or mortal.

3. As to the question, What amount is required in theft to constitute a grave sin? there is some difficulty in determining it with mathematical precision.

Some teach that without regard to the condition of the person from whom we steal, as to whether he is rich or poor, it can be held that it would always be grave matter to steal to the amount of the daily wages of a working-man, morally speaking.

It is, however, more commonly taught that the gravity of thefts must be judged in respect to persons, places, and times. Father Gury, an eminent theologian writing in France, has very recently determined the amount in the following manner:[1] Considering the principal countries of Europe and the circumstances of the present time, it would seem that for grave matter we should require (1) to the value of a franc in regard to the poor, or a less amount according to the greater necessity of the poor person; (2) to the value of about two or three francs in regard to workmen who, by manual labour, gain their daily living; (3) to the value of four or five francs in regard to those who are moderately rich, and six or seven francs in regard to those who are well off or rich in the ordinary sense.

According to the circumstances of time and place and

[1] Comp. Theologiæ,' No. 607.

wages and value of things in these countries, I should say that we may substitute shillings for francs, and take Father Gury's rule as a guide with a certain amount of latitude, or, at all events, without deciding the matter with exactness, as it is a question that admits of latitude in its determination.

We are not to extend the proportion between the different conditions of persons to an indefinite extent, because in theft we must admit a certain amount as absolutely grave matter, and grave with respect to every class of persons, and which one can never exceed without mortal sin. This the good of society requires, so that a door may not be opened to innumerable thefts. Besides, in theft we have to consider not only the injustice contained in taking what belongs to another, but also that of taking or possessing what is not our own. This may be considered in itself, without reference to the persons from whom the goods or money are taken, and it does not matter whether they are rich or poor: as long as the thief takes or possesses what is not his own he sins to that amount. Some authors quoted by St. Alphonsus require to the amount of ten to fifteen francs for matter absolutely grave in theft, or, as we may say, ten to fifteen shillings. All this, however, must be estimated according to the value of money in different places and at different times.

4. It is necessary to attend to the injury done another in this matter of theft. This comes into the nature of the sin, as it does a greater injustice and injury to another if he be poor than if he be rich. A shilling is more to a poor man than five shillings to a rich man, and more injury is done by taking a small amount from one who is poor than a greater amount from a rich man. A very trifling thing might be sufficient to cause a serious injustice; thus, to take a needle from a tailor who has no other, and thus prevent him from earning his day's wages, would be a grave matter for the poor man.

As we cannot determine exactly the amount required for a mortal sin of theft, we must be satisfied with the general rule laid down by moralists—namely, to consider that as mortal which is equivalent to the daily wages of an ordinary honest workman, or to that which would be regarded as sufficient for the daily sustenance of the person from whom it is taken, attending to the different conditions of persons, because to take from a man what is necessary for his daily support is to do him a serious injury.

We have to admit that even this rule is rather obscure and not universally received, and therefore the solution of this question depends on the moral judgment of men, and we cannot state anything more certain on the point than the opinions which we have here given.

In a twofold way the theft of a thing in itself trivial may be a grave sin (1) by the *intention* of stealing a great amount, or by many small thefts to acquire a large sum; (2) by the coalescing of small thefts continued without interruption of the will until they amount to a great quantity. In thefts of this kind a greater amount is required for a mortal sin than in cases where the full complement is taken at once; and this is the case especially when the small thefts are from different parties.

5. There are reasons that excuse from the guilt of theft.

(1) *Extreme Necessity.*—So that if a man finds himself, or sees another, in extreme necessity, he may take what is necessary to remove the want, because, in such a necessity, all things are common property as far as they are required for the relief of the necessity. And what is taken under such a necessity, and consumed by a man who has no means in reality or in prospect, is not subject to the obligation of restitution.

According to some grave authors, if a person can obtain relief in extreme necessity by begging he would not be

justified by stealing; but St. Alphonsus affirms it as more probable that this would not be the case if the shame of begging is so great that the man would prefer death to it. Practically speaking, in such a necessity help may always be obtained except under very extraordinary circumstances. The law of the land does not, therefore, take into account this necessity to justify thefts, although it seems doubtful, even according to it, whether extreme necessity is sufficient to negative a felonious intention to appropriate.

(2) *Occult Compensation.*—The second cause that exempts from the guilt of theft may be occult compensation, under lawful conditions. Occult compensation, ordinarily speaking, is unlawful, because it is against right order, and grave irregularities are likely to follow from it, such as scandals, disgrace, the danger of double payment, and the danger of frequent abuse. It may, however, be perfectly lawful under certain conditions. These conditions are (*a*) that the debt be certain, and (*b*) that its payment cannot be otherwise, even by a lawsuit, obtained.

A servant who judges his salary insufficient cannot have recourse to occult compensation. A proposition asserting this was condemned by Innocent XI.

St. Alphonsus, however, teaches[1] that if a servant freely engages with his master for low wages, he cannot afterwards secretly compensate himself; the case would be different if, through necessity, arising out of a state of misery, he would agree to a salary very much below that which is just. In this case he could secretly compensate himself up to that which is the lowest just salary for men in his position, unless the master can find others justly willing to work for the same low price, and only takes in this man through charity and in order to relieve him in his want.

6. We have to note some special modifications with

[1] No. 522. *Vide* etiam 523 et 524.

regard to the thefts of wives and of children living in their parents' house. Wives are guilty of theft by stealing from their husbands, and husbands are likewise guilty of theft i they steal any portion of their wives' goods, viz., property, or those things which they have in their own name and under their own dominion. It is, however, lawful for a wife, in the administration of the goods of the house and the management of family expenses, (1) to give alms and donations according to her state and position; (2) to take that amount in her husband's absence that she may reasonably presume he would grant were he present; (3) to save from what is allowed her for clothing and the expenses o the house, provided no one suffers want thereby; (4) to take something to ward off the spiritual or corporal ruin of the husband or family; (5) to help her parents in want, and also brothers and sisters, but this must be in moderation, and only to be used when husbands are unreasonably unwilling to give any assistance. It is advisable to act with his knowledge in these and similar matters; but if he be morose, mean, exacting, and too sensitive of his marital authority, the wife is quite right in using her own discretion in these matters, and no injustice is thereby committed, provided the limits of moderation and natural equity be not exceeded. She is not the servant of her husband, but his help-mate and what is called his *better-half*, which is very often literally true. (6) She may lawfully take secretly from a husband who squanders his earnings and his money in sin and drunkenness whatever is necessary to keep herself and her children in food and clothing with decency.

As to those lazy husbands who allow themselves to be kept and supported by their wives, it would be a good thing to allow them to feel the effects of poverty and privation, then they might look out for something to do, and do it, and thus assist their wives and families.

Children become guilty of theft when they appropriate the money or goods of their parents, that is, those things of which their parents have the dominion and the administration. They are not allowed to do so, ordinarily speaking, for the purpose of occult compensation as long as they have no profession or earnings in their own right: their home work is ordained for the common good of the family, and children are supposed to give their services at home without wages from their parents. At the same time, parents must remember to treat their children properly. They are entitled to food and clothing, and pocket-money according to their state. Sometimes sons and daughters work at home until advanced life, and are treated by unjust parents as children, even when they are twenty-five, thirty, and forty years of age (in Ireland), and parents grudge them a few pence for recreation or even necessary purposes; in such cases these grown-up or old children, as we may call them, may justly take what they require within the bounds of moderation. They have earned it well, and it is the unfortunate social circumstances under which they have to live that has prevented their emancipation and their obtaining employment and good remuneration for their labours. With regard to the thefts of children living at home, theologians require a double quantity to constitute grave matter: that is, as to eatables, etc., and those other usual things that are taken at home without permission. All the members of the family lead a kind of community-life, and home goods are more or less in common, and therefore the presumed permission of parents may generally be supposed.

Children and servants may give moderate alms, especially in food to the poor. The permission of the Christian parents and masters may be supposed in such cases of need, unless they may give a positive prohibition in this

respect. They may prohibit it to prevent prodigality and waste on the part of children or servants, who may be tempted to exceed moderation in this alms-giving, and who may be more easily deceived by rogues and vagabonds. As I have already stated, in extreme necessity the poor may be helped by anyone, or they may take for themselves as much as is necessary to relieve that pressing want; that is, to preserve their lives and save themselves from starving.

7. There is one particular species of theft or robbery that we must not omit to notice—that is, what is called sacrilege. It means to steal a sacred thing from even a profane place, or to steal something which belongs to a sacred place, such as to the sanctuary or Church.

This is a twofold sin, one against justice and the other against religion. It is against justice inasmuch as it is theft or an appropriation of what does not belong to us; it is against religion because it is disrespectful to God. In a small matter it would still be a sacrilege, but only a venial sin by reason of the levity of matter which may be admitted in sacrilege as well as in other sins against justice.

To this species of sin belong the usurpation of ecclesiastical property, of churches, hospitals and pious foundations, the unjust suppression of religious houses, and robbing them of their revenues. Those guilty in this respect merit the name of sacrilegious robbers, and they are guilty also of injury to souls by depriving the souls in purgatory of the benefit of the sacrifices and offices for which so many pious foundations have been made, and we may well apply to them the words of the holy king David: *They eat the sacrifices of the dead*[1]—that is, they waste in prodigality and banqueting moneys left in bequest for masses, for alms, and other pious purposes.

[1] Ps. cv. 28.

CHAPTER V.

DIFFERENT SORTS OF INJUSTICE.

1. Fraud: its meaning. How it affects contracts.
2. The price of things – how considered in commerce.
3. The special titles that justify dealers in exceeding the usual price.
4. Whether it is lawful to sell a defective article without making known the defects.
5. Extortion: its meaning in the law of England and in Scotch law.
6. Unjust lawsuits.
7. When medical men, judges, advocates, notaries and lawyers generally may be considered guilty of injustice.
8. Usury: (1) Its meaning formerly, and how it is now understood (2) The legal rate of interest. (3) Usury in its strict sense unjust and unlawful. (4) The three titles under which it may be lawful to take interest for money. (5) The custom with regard to legal interest.
9. Retaining unjustly the goods of another.

BESIDES theft and robbery, we may mention other different kinds of injustice, *e.g.*, *fraud*, *extortion*, *unjust lawsuits*, and *usury*.

1. *Fraud.*—This means deceit, deception, trickery, as any artifice by which the right or interest of another is injured. It is a stratagem intended to obtain some undue advantage, or the obtaining of an advantage over another by imposition or unjust means, particularly deception in contracts or bargains in selling and buying, either by stating falsehoods or suppressing truth. Fraud affects contracts and their validity, and the provisions of the civil law in this matter may be regarded as theologically and morally correct.

'The validity of a contract is destroyed when there is an error in the essentials of the contract through the fraud of any of the contracting parties. In this case the party upon whom the fraud has been practised has not really given his consent to the provisions contained in the contract, inasmuch as he has been fraudulently kept in ignorance as to what these provisions were, and therefore the contract is altogether void, and cannot be enforced by one who was no party to the fraud, and has acquired the right of the fraudulent party to his share of the contract. When the error is not in the essentials the contract may, nevertheless, be invalidated if fraud has been used by either of the parties to bring it about. . . . Fraud may be by false representation, concealment of material circumstances that ought to be revealed, underhand dealing, and by taking advantage of imbecility or intoxication, especially when the fraudulent party has made the other party intoxicated with intent to obtain the consent of the latter to a contract to which he knows he would not have given his consent when sober.

'In commercial dealings a certain latitude is allowed to misrepresentation when it amounts to no more than the ordinary artifices to which tradesmen resort in order to find purchasers for their goods, and against which it is presumed that every purchaser ought to be on his guard. Such misrepresentation only amounts to what lawyers term *dolus bonus*, and is not sufficient to constitute fraud or *dolus malus* in the legal sense of the term. In regard to concealment, again, no fraud is considered to have been practised unless it can be shown that one party to a contract has concealed what he was bound to discover to the other.

'The deceiving by false weights or measures or false tokens comes within the class of criminal offences.'[1]

2. In commerce we must consider two things, the price

[1] 'Popular Encycl.'

and the merchandise. The price may be either *legal*—that is, when the law fixes the value of goods and the price at which they have to be sold; or it may be the common market-price which is determined by the common consent or estimate of traders and buyers and sellers. This price, according to the common or general estimate of men in the trade, admits of a latitude, and is distinguished into three prices known as the *highest*, the *medium*, and the *lowest*. Those, therefore, sin against justice, and are bound to restitution, (1) who do not observe or keep to the legal price if such exists; (2) who without any of the excusing causes exceed the limits of the usual price; or (3) who practise fraud within the limits of that price by selling at a dearer rate and buying at a cheaper so as to deceive customers and clients.

3. The special causes or titles according to which dealers may be excused in exceeding the usual price are: (1) the loss of profit (*lucrum cessans*); (2) the danger incurred or likely to be incurred by giving trust (*damnum energens*); or (3) the danger of losing the profit or price, as well as the probabilities that the price of the article sold may go up or increase in the market, and when, to oblige a customer, a man parts with them when otherwise he would not do so; or (4) when payment is delayed and interest of money thereby lost, etc.

When goods have no fixed price either by law or usage, then the contracting parties have to agree to a just price, and this must be regarded as binding as long as the agreement is made in good faith, and no deception has been practised by either party.

4. With regard to merchandise, it may be asked whether it is lawful to sell a defective article. To sell an article defective either in *substance*, *quantity*, or *quality* as entire and complete, or to buy a sound and entire article as

defective is not lawful, but dishonest, and obliges one to restitution. The question also arises as to when the defects of a thing should be made known. The defects of a thing should, in justice, be made known to a buyer who asks, especially when a defect is occult and when it would be injurious. A dealer is bound, in justice, to make known defects in his wares or saleable articles when these would be of such a nature as to render the things worthless to the buyer, and which if known beforehand would prevent the bargain being made, and the same applies to defects that would render the things of very much less value, and in such cases the buyer is entitled either to the breaking off of the contract or otherwise to just indemnity.

The just price at public auctions and sales is that offered by the several bidders in the supposition that no fraud has been practised either by the sellers, the buyers, or the officials.

We may summarize under a general rule embracing many particular modes of injustice that it is unlawful to sell a thing that is defective in substance, in quantity, or in quality, as whole and sound, or to buy a thing whole and sound as defective. In such cases injustice is committed, and the party guilty of it is bound to restitution.

A seller is strictly bound to make known any defect in a thing that would render it either useless or injurious to the buyer, and this whether he be asked or not. Ordinary small defects need not be revealed, and certain little stratagems used by traders are not usually against justice, though they may be contrary to truth, as, for example, saying that the goods cost more than they did, complaining of the little profits brought by them, that he is selling them at a loss, extravagant praise of the ware, saying that he is *selling off* announcing *great bargains*, and the like. There is no fraud committed in this way, inasmuch as such stratagems are

common to the trade, and people in general understand them, and are not usually deceived by them.

5. *Extortion.*—By extortion is meant the act or practice of wresting anything from a person by force, duress, menaces, authority, illegal exaction, illegal compulsion to pay money, or to do some other act.

In the law of England extortion is usually applied to that abuse of public justice which consists in the unlawful taking by a public officer, under colour of his office, of any money or valuable thing from a person where none is legally due, or where less than the sum demanded is due, or where the sum demanded has not yet become due. But in the phraseology of the law of Scotland the term is also applied to the offence or delict of compelling one by force or fear to execute a deed, or to perform an act, or to contract an obligation which of his own inclination he would not have done.

Extortion in a wide sense signifies any oppression under colour of right, but strictly it is when an officer takes by colour of his office any money or valuable where none is due, or not so much is due, or before it is due. The punishment is removal from office, fine, or imprisonment, according to the civil law. In conscience extortion is a sin against justice, and the man guilty of it is bound to restitution.

6. *Unjust Lawsuits.*—Christians should not be easily led into lawsuits and litigation. It is sometimes right and just to go to law, especially to defend the poor, the widow, and the orphan against oppression, and to defend our rights; but in protecting these rights we must always observe truth, charity, and justice, according to the advice of St. Paul: *If it be possible, as much as is in you having peace with all men. Not revenging yourselves, my dearly beloved, but give place unto wrath, for it is written: Revenge to me; I will repay, saith the Lord.*[1]

[1] Rom. xii. 18, 19.

Under this head we may consider the following injustices that may be committed :

7. Medical men are unjust if they pass themselves off as skilled and qualified when they are not, if they prolong a case of sickness for the sake of gain, and also by multiplying useless visits, and by charging fees that are too high ; also by using a doubtful remedy by way of experiment, when they can have a certain or more probable remedy for the cure of the disease.

Judges are unjust by not administering justice according to the law and the order of rights, but according to their own arbitrary wills, or by allowing their sentences to be influenced by fear, or love, or hope, or hatred, or any other unworthy motive ; they also sin against justice by increasing the penalty or by diminishing it to the detriment of another ; also by pronouncing doubtful or ambiguous judgments which give rise to further expenses and litigation.

Advocates are unjust if they knowingly undertake an unjust cause, or if they do not give up a cause which they wisely take up, but find afterwards to be unjust, unless it be to prosecute it so far as to recover expenses ; they also act unjustly by undertaking a cause whose contrary is more probable, to the extent that there is a moral certainty that it will be lost, and much more by urging people into dangerous and risky litigation ; also by neglecting to bring before the judge some reasons that may be important to their client, by revealing the secrets of the case to the adverse party, by undertaking more cases than they are able properly to attend to, by citing false or abrogated laws, or by turning the existing laws into a wrong interpretation, by increasing the expenses because the opposing party loses the case, or by imputing false crimes or vices to the party, etc.

Notaries and solicitors become guilty of injustice by not

noting down correctly the will or expressed intention of those who enter into contracts before them or in their presence, or by ambiguous entries which give rise to injustices and litigations, by abusing the confidence of the parties to enrich themselves, by giving documents to transcribers with danger of error and mistakes, by making alterations in the entries so as to violate or impede the right of another, by not making known to the persons interested the contents of deeds or acts which they have to attend to in the matter of payment—*e.g.*, if heirs to an estate do not pay liabilities because the lawyer does not let them know of them—by advising a man to lend to another whom they know will not be able to pay back the debt, thus abusing the simplicity of one party in favour of another, etc.[1]

There are many other ways of practising fraud in these matters of lawsuits, prompted by ambition, interest, vengeance, self-love, envy, chicanery, and all the worst passions of human nature, and therefore St. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, in which he speaks of the true and perfect Christian spirit, says: *Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to be judged before the unjust, and not before the saints? Know you not that the saints shall judge this world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know you not that we shall judge angels? How much more things of this world? If, therefore, you have judgments of things pertaining to this world, set them to judge who are the most despised in the Church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you any one wise man that is able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers. Already, indeed, there is plainly a fault among you, that you have lawsuits one with*

[1] *Vide* 'Grand Catéchisme,' par P. D'Hauterive, tome vii., p. 126, note.

another. Would you not rather take wrong? why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? But you do wrong and defraud, and that to your brethren. Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God?[1]

8. *Usury.*—(1) Formerly usury meant interest, or a premium paid or stipulated to be paid for the use or loan of money. *In present usage* it is taken to mean illegal interest; a premium or compensation paid or stipulated to be paid for the use of money borrowed or retained beyond the rate of interest established by law. (2) In this country the legal interest was fixed by the Act 12 Anne, at 5 per cent., and all contracts made for the payment of any principal to be lent on usury above this rate were to be held utterly void. Usurious bargains are often protected by lending the money upon contingency, as annuities, or making the repayment to depend upon certain lives being in existence at a particular time. The usury laws have been relaxed by several recent statutes, and bills of exchange not having more than twelve months to run, and contracts for loans or forbearance of money above ten pounds, are no longer affected by these laws. But 5 per cent. remains the legal interest recoverable on all contracts unless otherwise specified. (3) Usury in the strict theological acceptance of the word, that is, receiving interest precisely for the loan of money and by virtue of the loan, is, according to St. Thomas, intrinsically unjust and unlawful. His argument is that it is unlawful to receive payment for what does not belong to us: money once lent no longer belongs to us but becomes the property of the borrower, so that he can dispose of it and use it as he likes, and if it should perish he would be the loser thereby, not the lender. Therefore it is the property of the borrower or the person to whom it is lent, so that the money-lender can only claim back the

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 1 *et seq.*.

amount in the same kind, not the same coins, and his right is not over the money lent, but over the borrower, against whom he can enforce his claim. As it is no longer his, therefore it would be unlawful to receive a premium or price for it.

(4) Although all this is, strictly speaking, true, yet there are always certain titles and contingencies extrinsic to the loan in connection with it, by reason of which it is quite lawful to take just and legal interest for the loan of money. These titles are three : (*a*) Real or probable loss. (*b*) The cessation of profits. (*c*) The risk of losing the principal. A fourth title may now be added, namely, the disposition of the civil law in permitting a certain amount of interest.

'It is, of course, perfectly right for us, when we lend money or any other kind of property, to protect ourselves against a real or probable loss. (i.) We may, therefore, receive interest as compensation when the loan occasions us a positive loss. If, for instance, we should be obliged to buy on credit the things which we required, and were consequently charged a higher price, we need not scruple to indemnify ourselves for the loss we should hereby suffer. (ii.) We are justified in taking interest when the loan prevents us from making the profits which we should otherwise have realized. Suppose we have a sum of money which we are going to use in trade, with the prospect of gaining a certain return on our investment, but a friend persuades us to lend it to him instead, we may require him to pay us the profits which we reasonably expected to make. (iii.) We may receive interest when there is a risk of losing the principal. If, for instance, we were asked to lend money to one, from whom we should, perhaps, never receive it back, there would be no harm in providing against the danger by receiving interest.

(5) 'Where none of these reasons exist, it is now generally

held that moderate interest, allowed by custom and by the law of the country, may be received with a safe conscience till the Church decides to the contrary The rate of interest which we may lawfully receive will vary with the risk which we incur. But if it exceed a just and fair compensation, or if, where no risk exists, it be more than is allowed by the general practice and the laws of the country in which we are living, we have no just claim to the excess.'[1] Besides, there may be an obligation of charity, distinct from the obligation of giving alms, of sometimes lending *gratis* to a person in need who may be able to give it back. Excessive interest such as has been exacted in past years in parts of Ireland, by the weekly, monthly, and quarterly loan, from so-called loan-offices, could not be justified by any of the above titles. It was a system of ruin to many poor families, and the money-lenders and gombeen men enriched themselves unjustly by the excessive interest which they enforced through the necessities of the poor and the needy. Some of them raised themselves through this unjust means to be landowners, and to carry on in another way the practice of unjust extortion by exorbitant rents, and to banish from their homes and lands so many poor exiled sufferers. In this matter I speak from certain knowledge, and I wish that some salutary lesson could reach any one of these unjust oppressors of the poor.

9. *Retaining unjustly another's goods.*—Besides the sin of unjust taking away and the several ways it may be committed, there is also the sin of retaining ill-gotten goods. This also may be committed in many ways: (1) In not restoring a deposit entrusted or confided to one, or in receiving stolen goods. (2) In taking advantage of mistakes made in reckonings and accounts. (3) In

[1] 'Manual of Instructions in Christian Doctrine,' Seventh Commandment.

retaining an article first acquired *bonâ-fide*, after finding out that its possession is unlawful. (4) In not rendering a faithful account of the things entrusted to our administration. (5) In not paying servants and labourers the just salary or wages that is due to them. (6) In not paying lawful debts. (7) By retaining a lost article found, without trying to find the owner, or not giving it up when the owner appears. (8) In not keeping promises made and contracts made and received in all matters of justice.

CHAPTER VI.

RESTITUTION.

1. The meaning and nature of restitution: its obligation.
2. Those bound to make restitution, and the titles under which the obligation is established.
3. The extent and nature of the obligation of restitution.
4. What and how much has to be restored. (1) The restitution to be made by the *bonâ-fide* possessor. (2) The meaning of the terms 'industrial,' 'natural,' and 'civil fruits.' (3) The three kinds of expenses —necessary, useful, and luxurious. (4) The restitution to be made by the *mala-fide* possessor. (5) The restitution to be made by the one who possesses in doubtful faith.
5. Where the restitution is to be made.
6. How it is to be made.
7. How the obligation of restitution may cease or be taken away.
8. To whom restitution is to be made. The order in which creditors are to be paid.

THE seventh commandment orders us to restore to another what belongs to him, and to repair the injury done him either in his person or property.

This commandment forbids us to take or to retain what belongs to another, or to cause injury to anyone in his property, either directly by ourselves or indirectly through others, by making them co-operators in our evil doings. This is what has been explained in the foregoing chapters or lessons. But besides the prohibitive part, the seventh commandment enforces a precept to do something without which it would be imperfect. This precept is to restore to

the real owner whatever we may unjustly possess, and to repair the injury which we may have caused our neighbour by any unjust acts.

The question of restitution is one of those that interests and affects to a great extent the moral state of society. It deserves very careful study, and it is for this reason that we have to examine the following points in connection with it: 1. The meaning and nature of restitution. 2. Who are bound to restore, or the title under which restitution becomes obligatory. 3. The extent and nature of the obligation. 4. What or how much has to be restored. 5. Where, how, when, and to whom restitution is to be made. 6. The co-operators in matters of injustice, and the order in which they are bound to restitution.

1. *Restitution* is an act of commutative justice by which what is taken away is returned, and the injury done repaired. Restitution in a grave matter is necessary for salvation, by *necessity of precept* (not by necessity of means) in reality, when this is possible, or, at least, in wish or in desire. The precept of restitution, which, according to the manner of expressing it, is affirmative, is primarily negative, as it is equivalent to this: *Thou shalt not steal.* It therefore binds always and at every moment. *Semper* et *pro semper.*

2. Who are bound to restore, or the titles or causes from which the obligation of restitution arises.

The causes or titles from which the obligation of restitution arises are usually two: the *title of the thing taken*, as, for example, when one possesses what belongs to another, or its equivalent; and the *title of unjust taking*, as, for example, if one should wilfully and unjustly injure another in his property.

These two titles may be found together or separated, and they differ in many respects.

In order that one may be bound to restitution under the title of unjust taking what belongs to another, three thing

are required, namely, guilt or fault, injury and a connection between the two, so that it can be truly said that the injury has been caused by the culpable action of another. This fault or guilt must be a wilful sin against commutative justice, otherwise restitution does not bind in conscience. What is called a *juridical* fault—namely, a violation of the civil law without any advertence or guilt of conscience, which often occurs—would be sufficient to oblige a man to give a thing or to pay a claim which can be enforced by the positive law, or by reason of contract or the sentence of a judge. For the most part this obligation, where no wilful sin has been committed, does not bind unless enforced by a judicial sentence.

3. *The extent and nature of the obligation.*

The obligation of restitution, under the *title of the thing possessed or received*, is grave in a grave matter, but light in a light matter.

By reason of *unjust taking*, it is grave if the injury caused be grave, and the sin be grievous by which it has been caused; it is only light if the injury is only light, although a grave sin may have been committed in causing it, and it is more probable that there is no obligation of restitution even if a grave injury follow from a light fault.[1]

4. *What and how much is to be restored.* Under this we have to consider separately the possessor that is in *bonâ fide* and the possessor in *mala fide*.

(1) The possessor in good faith is one who has obtained the thing honestly and finds out afterwards that he has no right to it. Thus, to buy a thing from a thief whom one believes to be the real owner. The possessor *bonâ fide* should restore the property of another if he has got it, or any portion of it that remains with him. He can, however, demand from the owner the price of it, in case he has

[1] St. Alph., No. 552.

purchased it at a public fair or market, or from the usual merchants or shop-dealers; and he can always claim the price back from the man of whom he bought the stolen goods. It is disputed whether a man can give back the stolen property to the thief in order to recover the price of it when the proper owner has not yet appeared to claim it.[1]

The possessor *bonâ fide* is not bound to restore any of the fruits of the thing during the time he has had it; certainly not the *industrial fruits*, and, according to the civil law which avails in conscience, he would not be bound to restore either the *natural* or *civil fruits*.

As these terms *industrial*, *natural* and *civil*, as applied to fruits, are purely theological, it is necessary to explain their meaning.

(2) The *industrial* fruits are those which a man through his own labour and cleverness obtains, as, for example, in commerce and business.

Natural fruits are those which come forth from the thing itself, without any labour or industry on the part of the owner, such as the fruit of trees, meadows, etc. Some other fruits are called *mixed* because they are partly *industrial* and partly *natural*, such as wheat, oats, etc.

Civil fruits are those which arise from the use of things and the legal rights to payments, such as rent, annuities, pensions, and the like. Now, by the *law of nature* the possessor *bonâ fide* would be bound to give up or restore the natural fruits if they exist and are not consumed, and mixed fruits inasmuch as they are *natural*, and in so far as they exist, always deducting his expenses By the law of France, he need not do so, and as this law is ordained for the public good, it may be followed even in conscience, inasmuch as the supreme power in the State can so decree, in order to avoid innumerable and inscrutable disputes and

[1] See St. Alph., No. 569 *et seq*

difficulties as to the amount of the fruits one may have to restore.

We have also to refer to the expenses, and give some explanation of the different kinds of expenses to be considered in law.

(3) Expenses are threefold: *necessary*, *useful*, and *luxurious*. The *necessary* are those without which the thing would perish or become deteriorated. The *useful* are those which, although not necessary, yet make the thing better, and increase its fruit. The *luxurious* are those which are not necessary, either for the preservation of the thing, or for increasing its fruit, but are only for the sake of ornament or pleasure.

Now, the possessor *bonâ fide* is entitled to all the expenses incurred on account of the thing possessed. The owner is bound to refund to him the *necessary* expenses incurred in the preservation of the thing, such as food for cattle, etc.; also the *useful* expenses for the amelioration of the thing, so that he should refund the amount expended, or give the value of the improvement effected; it is also right that he should refund the *luxurious* expenses, at least inasmuch as by them the value of the thing is increased, or if the ornaments can be separable from the thing, then the owner must permit the possessor *bonâ fide* to take them, or he should pay the value of them.

What and how much has to be restored by the possessor *mala fide*, or by reason of the unjust taking of another's property?

Restitution must be made in this case to such an extent that the unjust possessor may in no way be enriched by the goods of another, and that the real owner may be preserved from injury and loss. He must be fully indemnified. This is the general rule. Hence:

(4) A possessor *mala fide* is bound to restore the

property of another, in itself or in its equivalent, even though he may in no way be enriched by it; and in whatever way the thing may have perished or been lost in his possession, the obligation of restitution remains. If the thing would certainly have perished or have been destroyed had it remained with the owner, by reason of some internal defect, or in the same catastrophe, according to St. Alphonsus,[1] he would not in this case be bound to restitution before a judicial sentence pronounced against him.

(i.) The possessor *mala fide* is bound to restore the thing according to its greatest value, either intrinsic or extrinsic, which it had whilst in his possession, or which it would have had with the owner, because the owner would in all probability have sold it at the time of its highest value; it is more probable, however, that he is not bound to restore the thing at the highest value which it happened to attain whilst in his possession, if it would not have attained that value with the proper owner; the owner in this case would suffer no detriment, and the thief gains no advantage by it.

(ii.) The possessor *mala fide* is bound to restore all the *natural* and *civil* fruits, but not the *industrial* gains.

(iii.) The possessor *mala fide* may deduct all the expenses incurred on account of the thing unjustly acquired—that is, the rightful owner should refund to him certainly all the necessary and useful expenses incurred in the preservation and amelioration of the thing, and it seems equitable that he should also refund all the expenses as far as by them the thing has become more valuable.

(iv.) The possessor *mala fide* is bound not only to restore the thing, or its equivalent, and all the fruit derived therefrom, but he must also repair all losses and damage sustained by the owner through his act of injustice.

[1] No. 620.

We have also to consider the case of one who possesses in doubtful faith—the possessor *dubio fide.*

(5) All theologians agree that a man who *from the beginning* doubts whether a thing is his or the property of another cannot with a safe conscience possess that thing as his own. In this case, before taking possession of it, or continuing in its possession after a serious doubt arises, he is bound diligently to inquire into the matter, in order to remove his doubts and to discover the truth; otherwise he becomes a possessor *mala fide.*

If the doubt supervenes or arises after one has come into the possession of a thing, he is bound to examine into the truth of the matter and to seek counsel, in order to remove the doubt. After having done this carefully, he may form his conscience according to the principle, *melior est conditio possidentis*, and have all the rights of a possessor *bonâ fide.* There is a great difference between this case and the former one when a doubt has existed from *the beginning*, as in that case there is no principle according to which a man can in good faith form his conscience.

5. *Where* the restitution is to be made.

In answer to this question, we may say in the first place, that in case of restitution, due solely under the title of the thing taken, or of the possessor *bonâ fide*, the thing has to be restored in the place in which it is at the time; or, if it has to be sent to another place, this is to be done at the expense of the owner. In the second place, if restitution be due by reason of unjust taking away, or unjust injury, it must be made in that place in which the owner would have had it or possessed it had it not been taken away or destroyed.

6. *How* restitution is to be made.

Without a just cause, restitution should be made at once and entirely, and not by halves.

It may be made secretly, if it cannot and ought not to be made publicly.

It sometimes can and should be made by and through another, provided this be a faithful and honest man, and at the risk of the owner if the restitution be by reason of *the thing taken.* If by reason of the *unjust taking*, it must be made at the risk of the person who is bound to restore, so that if it be lost on the way he is still bound to make it good. Sometimes it may be done through the confessor, but they are advised not to take upon themselves this duty without some grave cause or necessity.

When restitution is to be made.—Morally speaking, it should be made on the very first opportunity, unless some just cause excuse one, otherwise the unjust possessor continues in an uninterrupted state of sin each moment of his life during the time; and the sin is multiplied if the will of retaining, morally interrupted, be renewed, and as often as it may be renewed.

When a dying man is bound to restitution, this ought to be made certain and secure at once, and not left to his heirs to restore, always, however, saving the honour and good name of the sick man, as well as the confessional seal.

Restitution may be deferred as often and as long as the owner or creditor consents to it. This may reasonably be presumed when restitution is morally impossible; and this is the case when one cannot restore without injury to and loss of something in a higher order than temporal things, such as the loss of salvation, of life, of reputation, and of honour, likewise of one's state and position, when this has been honestly and justly acquired.

7. The obligation of restitution may be taken away altogether by various causes, especially (1) by the perpetual inability of the debtor to pay: (2) by a true, valid, and liberal remission on the part of the creditor.

A debtor who becomes bankrupt, or settles with his creditors at so much in the pound, is not excused entirely from restitution if he afterwards becomes a wealthy man, unless the creditors have ceded their rights. Whether in a legal case of insolvency they do cede their rights or not, I cannot say; or whether an honest bankrupt has suffered enough in going through the bankruptcy court to make us interpret and understand the process of law as exempting from all liability as regards the debts which he cannot pay, is a matter for special consideration in individual cases. The civil law in this, as in other temporal matters, may serve as a guide and rule, even as regards our consciences, provided we have been honest and acted conscientiously throughout, both with our creditors and lawyers.[1]

8. *To whom* is restitution to be made? Restitution is usually to be made to him who has a lawful title to the possession of the thing, whether he be the owner or not. Or it should be made according to the wishes of the owner. It may be too expensive to make restitution to himself in case of his living abroad, for example, and he can direct it to be made to another in his name. If the owner be unknown, then the rule laid down for things found may be followed, and the *possessor bonâ fide* may retain what he has. If there be many creditors, the privileged ones may take precedence according to the order and nature of the privilege; thus, *privileged debts* have first to be paid. These are those which humanity has rendered preferable on the funds of a deceased person, and which an executor may pay without a decree, such as sick-bed and funeral expenses,

[1] Professor Crolly, of Maynooth ('De Just. et Jure,' t. 3, n. 1232) sustains this view, but Lehmkuhl thinks that other adjuncts should appear, showing that the creditors have forgiven the debt, before he would exempt a bankrupt, who afterwards becomes rich, from the obligation of restitution.—Lehmkuhl, vol. i., n. 1035.

a year's rent of the house, and servants' wages since the last term.

With regard to *common debts*, the rule to be followed is, 'First come, first served' They may be paid in the order in which the creditors apply for payment. Debts contracted by one's own fault or by an onerous obligation, should be paid before all gratuities and gifts, *nemo liberalis, nisi liberatur*, and those that are certain have to be paid before the uncertain in a case where a man wishes to pay uncertain debts. There is no law which obliges a man to pay the debts due to a poor creditor before those due to a rich one, although it may be advisable to do so. Where there is not enough to pay all creditors, there is no injustice in paying one off to the full amount, even though the others may suffer loss; and the man who receives full payment under such circumstances is not guilty of any injustice by retaining the amount paid; he is not bound at his own loss to impede the loss of another.

CHAPTER VII.

CO-OPERATORS IN INJUSTICE.

1. The nine ways of co-operating in injustice.
2. Co-operation: (1) By command. (2) By counsel. (3) By consent. (4) By praise or flattery. (5) By recourse or receiving. (6) By partaking. (7) Negative co-operation, by silence, not preventing, not manifesting.
3. The order to be observed amongst unjust co-operators in the matter of restitution.
4. Conclusion of the seventh commandment.

1. THERE are nine ways of co-operating in injustice, five positive and direct, and three negative and indirect.

They are contained in the following Latin lines:

'Jussio, consilium, consensus, palpo, recursus,
Participans, mutuus, non obstans, non manifestans.'

These may be translated into corresponding English words:

'Command, counsel, consent, praise, recourse or reception,
Partaking, silence, non-preventing, not making known.'

The co-operators in injustice are bound to restitution by or under the title of *unjust taking* (one case, *participans*, excepted), if there be the three requisites to bind one under this head, namely, guilt, injury, and the real and efficacious connection between the guilt and the injury, so that the one follows from the other.

To treat of the co-operators as accomplices and their

individual obligations as to restitution, we must take them separately.

2. (1) *Co-operation by Command.*—This means that by ordering or asking we influence or induce another to perform an act of injustice in our favour.

The one thus ordering or commanding is responsible for all the injury which results from his command, and is bound to repair it; he is also bound to restitution for any injury which the servant or official suffers in carrying out the order, unless this latter took the duty upon himself freely and with perfect knowledge of the consequences.

The one thus commanding an act of injustice by revoking his order before its execution is free from the obligation of restitution if the revocation be efficacious and known to the person commanded before the injury is inflicted.

(2) *Counsel.*—This is the case of a man who, by advice, leads another to an act of injustice: advice may in this respect be either *doctrinal*, which declares the truth or lawfulness of the thing; or *practical*, or impulsive, by which the malice of the act being admitted yet urges on the unjust action, and that by persuading, by prayers and blandishments, or promises; or by showing its advantage or suggesting the means of doing it with security. In these two cases the counsel is said to be qualified.

The one who gives counsel in doctrine involving injustice to others (if the error be, through ignorance, gravely culpable), and others who counsel injustice in any other way, are bound to restitution to the person injured through the evil counsel, but not to the person who has been counselled to do the wrong, unless he be deceived by fraud, or unless the man who gave counsel had a special obligation of advising him properly and rightly.

The one counselling is freed from the obligation of

restitution if the revocation of his advice be efficaciously effected before the injury is inflicted, so that the whole force of the counsel may be removed before the deed is perpetrated.

It is the more probable opinion that the force or causality of a qualified counsel is not taken away by simple revocation, nor, therefore, the obligation of restitution; hence, something more in this case should be done to prevent the evil as far as the advice has the power of leading to it.

(3) *Consent.*—This manner of co-operating is when, by consent externally manifested, a man influences in an act of injustice. This may be done by partially effecting the work, as in the case of voting with others in the election of an unworthy person to an office, or by co-operating, as if a father should say to a son, 'I'll be responsible if you steal.'

(4) *Praise or Flattery.*—This is by adulation, by exalting the deeds of highwaymen and brigands and condemning the sloth of honest men, or by some such means to lead the young and hot-headed into acts of injustice.

(5) *Recourse or Receiving.*—This may be by receiving and sheltering a thief as such, by concealing or buying stolen things, or by protecting them by act or word or service on our part.

(6) *Partaking.*—This may be either in the thing stolen or the booty, of which a man may receive a portion in good or bad faith without influencing at all in the theft, or in the omission of restitution; or it may be in the unjust action by receiving a portion of the stolen property in such a manner as to influence in the theft or in the omission of restitution; or by co-operating with the unjust action by way of helping the principal or efficient cause of it, as, for example, by assisting the thief in opening the door, in holding a ladder for a burglar, etc. He who, through fear of death or mutilation or grave disgrace, lends his help in an unjust

action to a thief or rogue, does not, according to the more probable opinion, sin if he acts against his own intention in the matter, and only for the purpose of saving himself from bodily harm or his name from dishonour. And in such a case he is not bound to restitution. But, according to St. Alphonsus,[1] he could not lend his aid to robbing another in order to save his own property, unless he has the intention of making compensation afterwards.

(7) *Silence, not Preventing, not Manifesting.*—These are the negative ways of co-operating in acts of injustice These are those who, by not speaking, or crying out, or interfering, or by not denouncing, influence the doing of an injury which they are bound to prevent in justice either by contract or by reason of their office.

A confessor is not bound either by his office or by contract to prevent an injury to a third party; consequently, by omitting to admonish a penitent of the obligation of restitution to a third party, he is not thereby bound to restore to that party. And it is more probable that a confessor is not bound by justice to make amends to the penitent for any injury that may have befallen him through the want of admonition on his part.

Gamekeepers, forest-rangers, tax-gatherers, are bound by justice, and by contract, to impede injuries and frauds in regard to those things committed to their charge, and in case of grave injustice following from gross negligence on their part they would be bound to restitution, not, however, to the fines inflicted on the delinquents.

Domestic servants, according to the more common opinion, are bound by justice (namely, *ex quasi contractu*) to impede the thefts of strangers or outsiders, but not those of their follow-servants, although there are grave authors who teach that they are not bound to either, except by

[1] No. 571.

charity. Servants, ordinarily speaking, only bargain for doing the work for which they are employed, and not to watch over their master's goods.

3. *The order to be observed amongst unjust co-operators as to restitution:*

In the first place, the one who has the stolen property is bound to restore it. Secondly, the *mandans* or the one ordering the theft. Thirdly, the one who has perpetrated the deed. Fourthly, the other positive causes, according to their amount of influence in effecting the injustice; and, fifthly, the negative causes, without any special order, but according to the manner in which they influenced the injustice.

This order affects all who influence the whole injury or wrong, and consequently they are bound *in solidum*, that is, each is bound to restore the whole amount if the others fail as to their part of the restitution. According to the advice of St. Alphonsus, in dealing with ignorant people, although they may be bound to restitution *in solidum*, it may not be expedient to insist upon it, as they cannot easily understand why they should be obliged to pay more than their share, whilst their confederates pay nothing. And we may suppose that the owners of the stolen property agree in this matter, that each one restore only the amount for which he is responsible, otherwise they might not get anything back if they insist on urging the payment of the whole amount.

4. In concluding the instructions on the seventh commandment, let us remember that a Christian does not fulfil his obligation in regard to it by not injuring his neighbour in temporal goods, but it is necessary also to give alms. Alms-deeds are necessary for all who have the means to make them, so that they sin by neglecting to fulfil this obligation.

The obligation of giving alms is founded (1) on the

natural law, which enjoins us to do to others as we would wish others to do unto us, and as we would wish to be helped in our needs, so should we render assistance to the needy; (2) on the law of God, according to the words of Ecclesiasticus:[1] '*Afflict not the heart of the needy, and defer not to give to him that is in distress. Reject not the petition of the afflicted, and turn not away thy face from the needy. Turn not away thy eyes from the poor, for fear of anger, and leave not to them that ask of thee to curse thee behind thy back.*'

[1] Ecclus. iv. 3 *et seq.*

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.—ANALYSIS OF THIS COMMANDMENT.

'*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour*' (Exod. xx. 16).

1. Bishop Hay in his introduction to this commandment gives the following questions and answers:

Q. 1. What is the principal end and design of this commandment?

A. To direct us in the use of our tongue with regard to truth, and in the duties we owe to our neighbour's reputation.

Q. 2. What are the sins forbidden by this commandment?

A. Lies of all kinds, whether in words or actions, and injuring our neighbour's reputation, whether by backbiting, detraction, or calumny.

Q. 3. What are the duties enjoined by this commandment?

A. To speak and witness the truth in all things: in our conversation, judgments, and compacts with others; to defend the reputation of the absent, and to restore his good name if we have injured it.

2. I may add to this the following analysis taken from the Church Catechism.

The eighth commandment treats of our duty respecting our neighbour's *character* and *reputation.*

Sins Forbidden Literally.—(1) *Perjury* in a court of justice.

This is forbidden in two commandments: (i.) In the second as an offence against God, *i.e.*, taking God's name in vain. (ii.) In this eighth, as an offence against our neighbour.

Examples in Scripture: (i.) *In the story of Naboth: And bringing two men, sons of the devil, they made them sit against him; and they, like men of the devil, bore witness against him before the people.*[1]

(ii.) *In the trial of our Saviour: For many bore false witness against Him, and their evidences were not agreeing.*[2]

In Spirit: (i.) *Evil speaking* (*i.e.*, *maliciously* saying what is calculated to injure another's character). *Let all bitterness, and anger, and indignation, and clamour, and blasphemy, be put away from you, with all malice.*[3] *Thou shalt not be a detractor, nor a whisperer among the people.*[4]

(2) *Lying* (including falsehood, equivocation [pure] and exaggeration): *Wherefore putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbour; for we are members one of another.*[5]

Examples in Scripture: (i.) Gehazi, who lied to Elisha, punished with leprosy.

(ii.) Ananias and Sapphira, who lied to St. Peter, punished with death.

(3) *Slandering* (or bearing false witness in private life): *The man that in private detracted his neighbour, him did I persecute.*[6]

Duty enjoined.—(1) *Perfect truthfulness: Lord, who shall dwell in Thy Tabernacle? or who shall rest in Thy holy hill? He that walketh without blemish and worketh justice. He that speaketh truth in his heart; who hath not used deceit in his tongue.*[7]

(2) *Charity.—Charity thinketh no evil, believeth all things, hopeth all things.*[8]

[1] 3 Kings xxi. 13. [2] Mark xiv. 56. [3] Eph. iv. 31. [4] Lev. xix. 16. [5] Eph. iv. 25. [6] Ps. c. 5. [7] *Ibid.* xiv. 1-3. [8] 1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER I.

ON LIES.

1. The definition and meaning of a lie.
2. Division of lies: (1) Jocose. (2) Officious. (3) Malicious. (4) Dissembling. (5) Hypocrisy. (6) Adulation or flattery. (7) Boasting. (8) Breaking a promise.
3. Every lie of its own nature is a sin.
4. The teaching of the Catechism of the Council of Trent on this subject.
5. Scriptural proofs of this doctrine.
6. Objections answered.
7. Lies when only venially, and when mortally sinful.
8. Malicious lies partake of the malice of the injury which they cause.
9. For no cause can it be lawful to tell even the least lie.

THIS commandment, as already signified, prohibits *primarily* and *directly* false testimony whether in *judgment* or out of *judgment*, judgment being here taken in the sense of a judicial trial. *Secondarily* and *indirectly* it prohibits the injury of the character and reputation of our neighbour, by *lying*, *detraction*, *contumely*, *rash judgment*, and *injurious suspicion*, and the *violation of a secret*.

We have to treat of these singly, with the exception of perjury, which is fully explained in the second commandment.

1. *Lies.*—According to St. Thomas, a lie is defined: 'A proposition uttered or expressed with the intention of saying that which is false.' It is a criminal falsehood, or an intentional violation of the truth.

The whole essence of a lie consists in its formal falseness or untruthfulness; that is, from the fact that one has the intention of saying what is false, either by words, or writing, or by signs. So that a man may act a lie as well as speak one. Hence, he is guilty of telling a lie who thinks what he states is false, though in reality it may be true, and, on the contrary, he is not guilty who states what is false thinking it is true. It is not essential to a lie, as some have thought, that it be uttered for the purpose of deception. Although a liar generally intends to deceive another, and a lie is of its own nature deceptive, yet the purpose to deceive another is not necessary for the essential guilt of a lie. This Billuart exemplifies by the example of a man who commits a crime in presence of a judge and persists in denying it lest he should be convicted; such a man certainly lies, and has no intention of deceiving the judge.

2. *Division of Lies.*—'There are several kinds of lies; the most ordinary are the following: (1) A *jocose* lie, which hurts no one, and is spoken to please those present, or for excuse, as the lie of Sara when she said she did not laugh.[1] (2) An *officious* lie, which hurts no person, and is intended to be of service to others, as the lie of the Egyptian midwives to Pharao.[2] (3) A *malicious* lie, which is injurious to God or hurtful to our neighbour, as was the lie of the devil to Eve when he said: *You shall not die.*[3] (4) *Dissembling*, of which the Scripture says: *The dissembler with his mouth deceiveth his friend.*[4] (5) *Hypocrisy*, which is when a man puts on the outward appearance of piety and holiness, which he has not in his heart; such was the vice of the Pharisees, for which Christ denounces so many woes upon them. (6) *Adulation or flattery*, which is when a man praises his neighbour beyond the truth, as was the flattery of the people to Herod when they cried: *The*

[1] Gen. xviii. 15. [2] Exod. i. 19. [3] Gen. ii. 4. [4] Prov. xi. 9.

voice of a god, and not of a man![1] (7) *Boasting*, when a man goes beyond the truth in praising himself. (8) Breaking one's promise to his neighbour.'[2]

Billuart, an eminent theologian of the Dominican Order, speaking of a jocose lie, notices that a falsehood may be spoken in joke in a twofold manner: i. When, from the circumstances or the manner of pronouncing, the words convey a different signification to that which they have in their own proper meaning; as if I should say in a laughing way to a friend: 'I fought all night with a Turk;' or, 'I went to Rome and back in a day;' or such-like things which we know no one will believe. ii. When the words, taking the circumstances into consideration, are retained in their natural and obvious meaning, and for the sake of keeping up the conversation I should narrate seriously an account of a hunting event in which I took part yesterday contrary to truth, and all of it the invention of the imagination.

Those things that are said in the first way are not lies, because the speaker not only has no intention of deceiving or saying what is false, nor can it be held that he does say what is false, when we consider the sense of the words and the circumstances, and the manner in which they are understood by the audience.

Those things said in the second way as a joke are lies, because, although the person speaking may have no intention of deceiving, he has the intention of saying that which is false, and, attending to the circumstances and the meaning attached to his words, he does say what is really false.

3. Every lie is of its own nature a sin because it is contrary to the truth, and, therefore, contrary to God, who is truth; it is also an injury to our neighbour by deceiving him. St. Thomas says that it is unnatural and wrong that

[1] Acts xii. 22.
[2] Bishop Hay, 'Devout Christian'—Eighth Commandment.

anyone should signify by word that which he has not in his mind. A lie if ever lawful would prove a public injury, faith in the words of our fellow-men would be lost, and a fatal injury would be done to social life. Plato and Origen erred, as do those who hold their doctrine, namely, that for a great and urgent necessity it is lawful to lie by way of remedy, because a lie is intrinsically evil, and therefore never lawful, not even to avert death or to save the commonwealth.

On the authority of Dr. Newman,[1] I quote the opinion of some English moralists on the subject of lying. Great English authors, Jeremy Taylor, Milton, Paley, Johnson, men of very different schools of thought, distinctly say that, under certain extraordinary circumstances, it is allowable to tell a lie. Taylor says: 'To tell a lie for charity, to save a man's life, the life of a friend, of a husband, of a prince, of a useful and public person, hath not only been done at all times, but commended by great and wise and good men. Who would not save his father's life, at the charge of a harmless lie, from persecutors or tyrants?' Again, Milton says: 'What man in his senses would deny that there are those whom we have the best grounds for considering that we ought to deceive, as boys, madmen, the sick, the intoxicated, enemies, men in error, thieves? I would ask, By which of the commandments is a lie forbidden? You will say, By the ninth' (our eighth). 'If, then, my lie does not injure my neighbour, certainly it is not forbidden by this commandment.' Paley says: 'There are falsehoods which are not lies—that is, which are not criminal.' Johnson: 'The general rule is that truth should never be violated; there must, however, be some exceptions. If, for instance, a murderer should ask you which way a man is gone.'

[1] 'Apologia,' 'Position of my mind since 1845.'

Against these I cannot give better or in a clearer manner the Catholic teaching than by quoting at some length from the Catechism of the Council of Trent. There, as Dr. Newman says, we find the following notices about the duty of veracity :

4. Thou shalt not bear false witness, etc. · ' Let attention be drawn to two laws contained in this commandment—the one forbidding false witness, the other bidding that, removing all pretence and deceits, we should measure our words and deeds by simple truth, as the Apostle admonished the Ephesians of that duty in these words : " Doing truth in charity, let us grow in Him, through all things."

' To deceive by a lie in joke or for the sake of compliment, though to no one there accrues loss or gain in consequence, nevertheless is altogether unworthy, for thus the Apostle admonishes : " Putting aside lying, speak ye the truth." For therein is great danger of lapsing into frequent and more serious lying, and from lies in joke men gain the habit of lying, whence they gain the character of not being truthful ; and thence, again, in order to gain credence to their words, they find it necessary to make a practice of swearing.

' Nothing is more necessary (for us) than truth of testimony in those things which we neither know ourselves nor can allowably be ignorant of, on which point there is extant that maxim of St. Augustine's, " Whoso conceals the truth, and whoso puts forth a lie, each is guilty, the one because he is not willing to do a service, the other because he has a wish to do a mischief."

' It is lawful at times to be silent about the truth, but out of a court of law, for in court, when a witness is interrogated by the judge according to law, the truth is wholly to be brought out. Witnesses, however, must beware lest, from over-confidence in their memory, they affirm for certain what have they not verified.

'In order that the faithful may with more good-will avoid the sin of lying, the parish priest shall set before them the extreme misery and turpitude of this wickedness. For in holy writ the devil is called the father of a lie, for in that he did not remain in truth, he is a liar, and the father of a lie. He will add, with a view of ridding men of so great a crime, the evils which follow upon lying, and, whereas they are innumerable, he will point out (at least) the sources and the general heads of these mischiefs and calamities—viz.: (1) How great is God's displeasure, and how great His hatred of a man who is insincere and a liar. (2) What little security there is that a man who is specially hated by God may not be visited by the heaviest punishments. (3) What more unclean and foul, as St. James says, than . . . that a fountain by the same jet should send out sweet water and bitter? (4) For that tongue which just now praised God, next, as far as in it lies, dishonours Him by lying. (5) In consequence, liars are shut out from the possession of heavenly beatitude. (6) That, too, is the worst evil of lying, that that disease of the mind is generally incurable.

'Moreover, there is this harm, too, and one of vast extent, and touching men generally, that by insincerity and lying faith and truth are lost, which are the firmest bonds of human society, and when they are lost supreme confusion follows in life, so that men seem in nothing to differ from devils.

'Lastly, the parish priest will set those right who excuse their insincerity, and allege the example of wise men, who, they say, are used to lie for an occasion. He will tell them what is most true, that the wisdom of the flesh is death; he will exhort his hearers to trust in God when they are in difficulties and straits, not to have recourse to the expedient of a lie.

'They who throw the blame of their own lie on those who

have already by a lie deceived them are to be taught that men must not revenge themselves, nor make up for one evil by another.'

5. I may now add some Scripture proofs of this doctrine, as the question is often asked, Does it appear from the Word of God that lying is of its own nature sinful?

(1) All lies, without exception, are forbidden in the Word of God. *Thou shalt fly lying.*[1] *You shall not lie neither shall any man deceive his neighbour.*[2] *Be not willing to make any manner of lie, for the custom thereof is not good.*[3] *Wherefore, putting away lying, speak ye the truth everyone with his neighbour.*[4] *Lie not one to another.*[5]

(2) The Scripture declares it to be infamous, and that the just man shall hate it. *A lie is a foul blot in a man, and yet it will be continually in the mouth of men without discipline.*[6] *The just shall hate a lying word.*[7] *The manners of lying men are without honour, and their confusion is with them without ceasing.*[8]

(3) The Scriptures also assure us that no liar can enter heaven. *Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and everyone that loveth and maketh a lie.*[9]

From these testimonies it is plain that all lies, without exception, are forbidden, and those who commit them are declared to be infamous.

6. In answer to the objections raised against this doctrine from the fact that the Egyptian midwives were rewarded for telling an officious lie to Pharao, and that some of the servants of God told lies at times for some end, as Jacob did to gain his father's blessing, we have the following explanation given by Bishop Hay:

[1] Exod. xxiii. 7
[2] Lev. xix. 11.
[3] Ecclus. vii. 14.
[4] Eph. iv. 25.
[5] Col. iii. 9.
[6] Ecclus. xx. 26.
[7] Prov. xiii. 5.
[8] Ecclus, xx. 28.
[9] Apoc. xxii. 15.

'The Egyptian midwives were indeed rewarded by God, not for telling a lie to Pharao, but for their humanity in saving the children, and because, the Scripture expressly says, *they feared God*, and refused to murder innocent children for fear of offending God. As for lies that may seem to have been told by holy persons in Scripture, some of the Fathers have endeavoured to free them from guilt by explaining their words in a mystical and parabolical sense; but, though they told a real lie, this would not prove that certain lies are not sinful, but would only show that even holy people are sometimes overcome and do what is wrong, in which they are neither to be commended nor imitated. David was a man according to God's own heart, and a prophet, yet he committed adultery and murder; will it thence follow that adultery and murder are not sins?' We are not therefore bound to force interpretations to show that Jacob did not tell a lie when he said he was the first-born and deceived his father, or that Abraham did not tell a lie when he said that Sara his wife was his sister. In this latter case Sara could with truth be called his sister as well as his wife.

7. Although lies are so severely condemned in Holy Scripture, we must not conclude that all lies are mortally sinful. We have therefore to consider the sort of sins that lies are.

According to St. Thomas, an *officious* and *jocose* lie can only be venial of its nature; because a lie of this kind in itself is not ordained to injure anyone; no serious injury to social life results from it.

A *malicious* lie is of its own nature mortal, because it is of itself opposed to charity, by which the soul lives united to God. It can, however, be venial either by reason of imperfect consent of the will, or the smallness of the injury done to our neighbour.

Jocose and officious lies, though in themselves really sinful, because contrary to truth and expressly forbidden by the Word of God, are not so great an evil as to break our peace with God, and are therefore only venially sinful.

A lie is mortally sinful when, besides being contrary to the truth, it is opposed to any of those virtues which are necessary to salvation, such as faith, hope, charity, justice, and religion, and when it is attended with scandal or confirmed with an oath. Hence, every lie with regard to the truths revealed by Jesus Christ is a mortal sin, and contrary to faith.

When, therefore, the Scripture declares all lies to be sinful, we must understand this of malicious lies when there is question of mortal sin or of exclusion from the kingdom of God. The other lies—namely, officious and jocose—only exclude from God's kingdom by disposing us to graver sins, but not in themselves, inasmuch as venial sins do not kill the soul.

8. All malicious lies are not of the same kind because they assume the malice of the injury which they inflict; thus, a lie that destroys the reputation of our neighbour is against justice, and has the malice of injustice annexed to it. A lie in doctrinal matters, such as announcing false miracles, exhibiting false relics, or corrupting the lives of the saints, would be against religion, and have the malice of irreligion attached to it. We may therefore conclude that in no case can it be lawful to tell even a venial lie in order to procure some good end.

9. 'It never can be lawful to do a thing which is in itself sinful, and no good end whatsoever can alter the nature of what is intrinsically evil, otherwise there is no crime which would not find an excuse; besides, it can in no case be lawful to do what the law of nature and the positive law of God expressly forbid in all cases without exception. Lastly,

St Paul expressly declares that we must not do evil that good may come of it.[1] And this he says when speaking of promoting the glory of God by telling a lie, declaring that it is a calumny against Christians to say that they hold it lawful to do evil that good may come. For these reasons it is the constant doctrine of the Catholic Church that in no case, and for no good end whatever, not even to save the world from destruction, can it ever be lawful to tell the least lie.' 'No good end can on any account excuse the least lie, and to advance or hold that pious frauds, as some improperly call them, can ever be properly used is no better than blasphemy. . . . To tell any lie whatsoever, even in the least point relating to religion, is always to lie in a matter of moment, and as Catholic divines teach, can never be excused from a mortal sin. . . . Good men may sometimes be too credulous in things in which there appears no harm. Nay, sometimes the more averse a person is to fraud himself, the more unwilling he is to suspect imposture in others. But no good man can countenance and abet a known fraud for any purpose whatever.' So speaks the pious and learned Alban Butler in the Introduction to the 'Saints' Lives,' p. 18, edit. Dublin, 1779.

[1] Rom. iii. 8.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT (*continued*).

CHAPTER II.

EQUIVOCATION AND MENTAL RESERVATION.

1. Equivocation: its meaning, and the various senses in which it may be taken.
2. Mental reservation: its different senses.
3. The sense in which mental reservation is condemned by the Church.
4. The sense in which mental reservation can be admitted and lawfully used illustrated from Dr. Newman's 'Apologia.'
5. Conclusions from the foregoing doctrine.
6. Simulation and dissimulation explained, and the sense in which the one is lawful, and the other unlawful.
7. St. Alphonsus' name and authority vindicated by Dr. Newman, and illustrated.
8. The obligation of a promise and of keeping faith with another.

1. *EQUIVOCATION.* This means ambiguity in speech—the use of words or expressions that are susceptible of a double signification. The ambiguity may arise either from the manner of pronouncing a word, as, for example, if a man, when asked something which he wants to conceal, should answer, 'I say *no*,' meaning that he is employing the word *no*; or the words themselves may be ambiguous, as, for example, if a man asked about an act of injustice should say that he was faithful to his contracts, meaning others than the particular fraud or theft affected by the question, or, having repented of his sin, should say, '*I am innocent.*'

Equivocation may be taken in a *strict* sense, so that no one can understand the sense in which it is meant; or it may be taken in a wider sense, so that the meaning of what

is said can easily be understood from the circumstances and external signs which accompany the speech. The former is the same as a *play upon words*. The latter is equivalent to what is known as an *evasion*, which is thus described by Dr. Newman : 'When, for instance, the speaker diverts the attention of the hearer to another subject; suggests an irrelevant fact, or makes a remark which confuses him and gives him something to think about; throws dust in his eyes; states some truth, from which he is quite sure his hearer, will draw an illogical and untrue conclusion and the like. The greatest school of evasion—I speak seriously—is the House of Commons; and necessarily so, from the nature of the case. And the hustings another.'[1]

2. *Mental reservation*, which means the act of keeping back something in the mind, concealment or withholding from disclosure. This is twofold, namely, *purely mental*, when the meaning of the words used cannot be discovered; not purely mental, when the meaning of the words is equivocal, but can be discovered by the audience, or understood from the manner of speaking or the surrounding circumstances.

Having explained the meaning of these words, I come now to a clear and distinct theological statement. It is never lawful to speak with the *reservation* known as purely mental, nor an *equivocation* in its strict sense The reason is because such a mode of speaking does not express our judgment or thoughts either by the words themselves, or by the circumstances under which we speak; it is, therefore, a mental deformity, a lie intrinsically evil, and perjury if sworn to.

3. The following propositions on this subject were condemned by Innocent XI : 'If anyone either alone or before others, whether interrogated, or of his own accord, or for the sake of recreation, or for any other end, should swear that he did not do a thing which in reality he has done,

[1] 'Apologia'—Note on Lying and Equivocation.

understanding within himself something else which he has not done, or done in a way different from that in which he did it or any other superadded truth (understood by himself), he does not really lie, neither is he a perjurer.'

This is the twenty-sixth proposition amongst those condemned by Innocent XI. The twenty-seventh is the following, which is also condemned by the same Pope: 'A just cause for using amphibologies is, whenever it is necessary or useful for the safety of the body, honour, or for preserving household goods, or for any other act of virtue, so long as the concealing of the truth may be thought expedient and prudent.'

It is in this sense Natalis Alexander speaks, as quoted by Dr. Newman in his 'Apologia': 'They certainly lie who utter the words of an oath without the will to swear or bind themselves, or who make use of mental reservation and *equivocation* in swearing, since they signify by words what they have not in mind, contrary to the end for which language was instituted, viz., as signs of ideas. Or they mean something else than the words signify in themselves and the common custom of speech.' To this Newman himself adds: 'And to take an instance. I do not believe any priest in England would dream of saying, "My friend is not here," meaning, "He is not in my pocket or under my shoe." Nor should any consideration make me say so myself. I do not think St. Alfonso would in his own case have said so; and he would have been as much shocked at Tayler and Paley as Protestants are at him.'[1]

4. Having stated the sense in which equivocation or mental reservation cannot be admitted, I shall now endeavour to explain the sense in which some equivocation and mental reservation can be admitted and lawfully used.

It is lawful sometimes for a *just cause* to use mental

[1] 'Position of my mind since 1845.'

reservation taken in its wide sense—that is, when not purely *mental*—and equivocal words, which can be understood by the hearers in the sense in which they are used by the speaker or in another sense. The reason is, for the common good there must be a way of concealing the truth sometimes; and oftentimes there is no other way of doing so but by *equivocation* or *mental reservation.* The use of these means in the sense here referred to is not a lie, nor does it of itself deceive, because the meaning of the speaker can be gathered from the equivocal words or the circumstances in which they are used; and if the person who hears does not understand them in the right sense, that can be attributed to his simplicity, or his ignorance, or even to his malice if he interrogated unjustly. It is in this sense we may understand the *reserve* and *economy* which Dr. Newman illustrates so well in his refutation of the charges made against him on this head: 'Now, as to the economy itself, it is founded upon the words af our Lord, *Cast not your pearls before swine;*[1] and it was observed by the early Christians more or less in their intercourse with the heathen populations among whom they lived. In the midst of the abominable idolatries and impurities of that fearful time, the rule of the economy was an imperative duty. But that rule—at least, as I have explained and recommended it in anything that I have written—did not go beyond (1) the concealing the truth when we could do so without deceit; (2) stating it only partially; and (3) representing it under the nearest form possible to a learner or inquirer when he could not possibly understand it exactly. I conceive that to draw angels with wings is an instance in the third of these economical modes, and to avoid the question, "Do Christians believe in a Trinity?" by answering, "They believe in only one God," would be an instance of the

[1] St. Matt. vii. 6.

second. As to the first, it is hardly an economy, but comes under what is called the *disciplina arcani*. . . . This, I think, is about the long and the short of the ground of the accusation which has been so violently urged against me as being a patron of economy.'[1]

It is in this sense that an *evasion* as defined above is perfectly lawful, and an instance of it is supplied in the history of St. Athanasius: 'He was in a boat on the Nile, flying persecution, and he found himself pursued. On this, he ordered his men to turn his boat round, and ran right to meet the satellites of Julian. They asked him, "Have you seen Athanasius?" and he told his followers to answer, "Yes, he is close to you." *They* went on their course as if they were sure to come up with him, while *he* ran back into Alexandria, and there lay hid till the end of the persecution.'

Before giving particular conclusions from the foregoing doctrine, I think it well to give one more short extract from Dr. Newman: 'Almost all authors, Catholic and Protestant, admit that when a *just cause is present* there is some kind or other of verbal misleading which is not a sin. Even silence is in certain cases virtually such a misleading according to the proverb, "Silence gives consent." Again, silence is absolutely forbidden to a Catholic as a mortal sin under certain circumstances, *e.g.*, to keep silence when it is a duty to make a profession of faith.'

5. From this teaching we may conclude:

(1) A guilty man, when interrogated even in a court of justice, can say, 'Not *guilty*, my lord'—that is, he is not convicted or proved guilty.

(2) All public persons can use a mental reservation or equivocation with regard to secrets committed to them. Thus, secretaries, ambassadors, generals of armies, magistrates, advocates, doctors, etc., as often as silence is necessary

[1] Newman's 'Apologia,' *in loco cit.*

for the public welfare, or for the honour and character of another, can lawfully answer, if asked an awkward question, '*I don't know*'—that is, they have not knowledge that they would be justified in using, or knowledge that they can communicate. A common type of this permissible denial, be it material lie or evasion, is at the moment supplied to me: An artist asked a Prime Minister who was sitting to him, 'What news, my lord, from France?' He answered, '*I do not know;* I have not read the papers.'

Dr. Newman illustrates this case: 'Supposing something has been confided to me in the strictest secrecy which could not be revealed without great disadvantage to another, what am I to do? If I am a lawyer, I am protected by my profession. I have a right to treat with extreme indignation any question which trenches on the inviolability of my position. . . . In like manner, as a priest, I should think it lawful to speak as if I knew nothing of what passed in the confessional. And I think, in these cases, I do, in fact, possess that guarantee that I am not going by private judgment . . . for society would bear me out, whether as a lawyer or as a priest, in holding that I had a duty to my client or penitent, such that an untruth in the matter was not a lie.'[1]

(3) Various *formulas* are lawful that are understood and received in common use, such as answering an importunate beggar by saying, '*I have no money*'—that is, none to give him; or by answering visitors by the usual '*Not at home*'—that is, not at home for them or in the sense of admitting visitors. Some such formulas may be used, I should think, in the case of all impertinent questioners.

(4) With regard to children, the opinion expressed by Dr. Newman should, as a rule, be acted upon: 'I do not think it right to tell lies to children, even on this account,

[1] 'Apologia,' *in loco cit.*

that they are sharper than we think them, and will soon find out what we are doing ; and an example will be a very bad training for them. And so of equivocation : it is easy of imitation, and we ourselves will be sure to get the worst of it in the end.'[1]

(5) As to mad men, or those out of their mind either temporarily through drink or perpetually through some mental malady, in order to keep them quiet, or from doing harm to themselves or others, equivocations and evasions in the sense above explained may be used ; and I see no difference between speaking to them and to irrational creatures in which a very great latitude for this kind of speech may be allowed.

6. In connection with this subject, we have to introduce *simulation* and *dissimulation*. St. Thomas defines simulation as a certain lie consisting in external actions—acting a lie. It is committed when a man, by external deeds or things, signifies something different to that which is in his mind. Then he concludes, as every lie is a sin, so every *simulation* is also a sin.

Dissimulation differs from *simulation* in this : that by it we only conceal our intent, or mind, either *negatively*, by omission, or *positively*, by doing something to conceal our thoughts or purpose. This can be done without sin when it amounts only to concealing a truth that it is not expedient to manifest, even though we may foresee that someone will be deceived ; his deception is permitted, but not intended. Thus, it is lawful sometimes to conceal one's faith—and in some cases it is better to do so than to confess it, as in the case where it would be only exposing it to mockery and derision were it manifested, or when its confession could do no good, but bring down suffering and misery on ourselves and others. I refer to cases when one is not obliged to

[1] 'Apologia,' *in loco cit.*

make a profession of faith, because in a case where this has to be done, it must be done, even at the risk of our lives.

7. As St. Alphonsus' name is so closely connected with this subject, and as he is so unjustly and flippantly pronounced by Protestant writers to be a patron of lying, I wish here to mention him as a perfect example of truth and honesty, as proved by one remarkable occurrence of his life, as quoted by Dr. Newman :

'In fact, it is notorious from St. Alphonsus' life, that he, who has the repute of being so lax a moralist, had one of the most scrupulous and anxious of consciences himself. Nay, further than this, he was originally in the law, and on one occasion he was betrayed into the commission of what seemed like a deceit, though it was an accident ; and that was the very occasion of his leaving the profession and embracing the religious life.'

The account of this remarkable occurrence is told in his Life: 'Notwithstanding he had carefully examined over and over the details of the process, he was completely mistaken regarding the sense of one document, which constituted the right of the adverse party. The advocate of the Grand Duke perceived the mistake, but he allowed Alfonso to continue his eloquent address to the end, without interruption ; as soon, however, as he had finished, he rose, and said with cutting coolness: "Sir, the case is not what you suppose it to be ; if you will review the process and examine the paper attentively you will find there precisely the contrary of all you have advanced." "Willingly," replied Alfonso, without hesitating ; "the decision depends on this question : whether the fief were granted under the law of Lombardy, or under French law." The paper being examined, it was found that the Grand Duke's advocate was in the right. "Yes," said Alfonso, holding the paper in his hand, "I am wrong ; I have been

mistaken." A discovery so unexpected, and the fear of being accused of unfair dealing, filled him with consternation, and covered him with confusion, so much so, that everyone saw his confusion. It was in vain that the President Caravita, who loved him and knew his integrity, tried to console him, by telling him that such mistakes were not uncommon, even among the first men at the bar. Alfonso would listen to nothing, but, overwhelmed with confusion, his head sunk on his breast, he said to himself, "World, I know you now! courts of law, never shall you see me again!" And, turning his back on the assembly, he withdrew to his own house, incessantly repeating to himself, "World, I know you now!" What annoyed him most was that, having studied and restudied the process during a whole month, without having discovered this important flaw, he could not understand how it escaped his observation' (Dr. Newman).

And this is the man, so easily scared at the very shadow of trickery, who is so flippantly pronounced to be the patron of lying.

I may conclude by quoting from the same eminent author the authority and example of St. Philip Neri.

'St. Philip,' says the Roman Oratorian who wrote his life, 'had a particular dislike of affectation, both in himself and others, in speaking, in dressing, or in anything else.

'He avoided all ceremony which savoured of worldly compliment, and always showed himself a great stickler for Christian simplicity in everything; so that, when he had to deal with men of worldly prudence, he did not very readily accommodate himself to them.

'And he avoided as much as possible having anything to do with *two-faced persons*, who did not go simply and straightforwardly to work in their transactions.

'*As for liars, he could not endure them*, and he was *con-*

tinually reminding his spiritual children *to avoid them as they would a pestilence.*

'These, says Dr. Newman, 'are the principles on which I have acted before I was a Catholic, these are the principles which I trust will be my stay and guidance to the end.'[1]

8 I may quote the following questions, with the answers, from Bishop Hay's 'Devout Christian':

'Q. What obligation does a promise bring one?

'A. Every lawful promise imposes a strict obligation of verifying what one has said, by fulfilling his promise; because by a promise we give our neighbour a full right to the performance of the thing promised in its proper time; we pledge our faith and oblige ourselves to do it.

'Q What kind of sin is it to break one's faith or promise given to another?

'A. It is a double sin, being both against justice and truth. It is against justice, because it deprives another of what he has a right to; and it is against truth, because it falsifies the faith we plighted by promising; and if the promise had been confirmed by oath, the breach of it adds to these two the guilt of perjury, makes it a crime of triple malice, and therefore a most grievous mortal sin.

'Q Are we obliged to keep our faith or promise with all mankind, though of a different religion from ourselves?

'A. Difference of religion makes no difference in the nature of truth and justice, and therefore it is the constant doctrine of the Catholic Church that a lawful promise made to any person, whether Mohammedan, Jew, heretic, or heathen, imposes a strict and absolute obligation of performance, if possible; and she has defined in one of her general councils (Constance) that the promiser is then, and then only, freed from any further obligation, when he has done all in his power to fulfil it.'[2]

[1] 'Apologia': Position of my Mind in 1845. [2] Chap. xviii.

CHAPTER III.

ON DETRACTION AND CALUMNY.

1. Signification of the terms: (1) Calumny. (2) Detraction. (3) Back-biting. (4) Tale-bearing. (5) 'Detraction,' the generic word for all.

2. The different ways of committing detraction directly and indirectly as given by St. Thomas.

3. Detraction: when a material sin only, and when formal.

4. Conditions required for the sin to be mortal.

5. Cases in which it is not a sin to manifest the sin of another.

6. Conclusions from the foregoing doctrine.

7. Some particular forms of the sin of detraction: (1) 'Busy-bodies.' (2) Mischief-makers. (3) Plain speaking. (4) Religious-party lies illustrated by the attacks of Protestants against the Church of Rome.

8. The willingness in England to listen to and encourage lies against the Catholic Church, and to slander convents and religious women.

9. The obligation of restitution arising from detraction; strict and binding under grave sin in certain cases.

10. Causes which exempt from the obligation of restitution in this matter.

THERE is such a thing as false witness in society as well as in a court of justice, and the commandment extends to the one as well as to the other, as is clear from the interpretation of the law given in Leviticus: *Thou shalt not be a detractor, nor a whisperer among the people. Thou shalt not stand against the blood of thy neighbour. I am the Lord.*[1]

1. Detraction is the unjust and secret defamation of

[1] Lev. xix. 16.

the character of another. Its various kinds are thus explained by Bishop Hay:

(1) Calumny or slander, which is speaking evil of one's neighbour knowing it to be false, as did the two elders when they accused Susannah of adultery.

(2) Detraction, which is telling evil of one's neighbour, which, though true, is secret, or known only to a few, because this is detracting or derogating from our neighbour's character unjustly and uncharitably.

(3) Back-biting, which is speaking with a malicious pleasure of the known faults of our neighbour.

(4) Telling tales or tale-bearing to the prejudice of our neighbour, which we do not know to be true or false, secret or known; and this kind generally partakes of the malice of some or other and generally of all the other three.[1]

(5) 'Detraction' may be taken as the generic word, including under it all the others. Thus, it becomes calumny when false, and in other cases it is either back-biting or tale-bearing, or any other form by which the good name of our neighbour is secretly and unjustly defamed.

2. Detraction may be committed *directly* and *positively* in the following four ways:

(1) By imputing a crime falsely to another, or calumniating one's neighbour—that is, the invention and circulation of lies against one's neighbour.

(2) By exaggerating the true or the false crime imputed to another.

(3) By manifesting the secret fault of another to his shame or injury.

(4) By putting a sinister and malicious interpretation on even the good work of one's neighbour.

These are four direct and positive ways of detracting given by St. Thomas, and the same eminent doctor assigns

[1] 'Devout Christian.'

also four ways of detracting *indirectly*, and as it were *negatively*, namely:

(1) By denying the good deeds or qualities of our neighbour.

(2) By lessening the good deeds or qualities of another, or by extenuating them, or by extolling them too much in order to injure or spite another.

(3) By keeping silence about the good gifts or qualities of another when and where we should manifest them, as would happen in the case of keeping silence and thereby approving of what is said when our neighbour is slandered in our presence.

(4) To speak so dubiously or coldly even in praising another that it may rather redound to his injury than to his good.

Of these eight modes of detraction, the more grave sins are those which tend directly to injure our neighbour, and the gravest of all is the first, which consists of calumnious or slanderous detraction.

3. Detraction may be only a *material* sin, when, speaking of crimes, one does not intend to injure the reputation of another by what he says, and does not foresee that his words will be injurious to the character of another. It is *formal* detraction when the crime of another is manifested with the direct intention of injuring him and of blackening his reputation.

4. That this sin may be considered mortal, it is required (1) that it be committed with perfect deliberation—which a man has when, in his perfect senses, he intends directly or at least adverts to the fact, or when he ought to advert, that his words may injure the name and reputation of his neighbour. By the want of this advertence very often detraction is only *material* and a venial sin; unless one has contracted the bad habit of detraction, in which case the sins committed

through custom are voluntary in their cause, as such bad habits begin with wilful and deliberate sins.

(2) That it be in a grave matter, which generally speaking must be something that either in itself or by reason of the person injured is very shameful or reproachful; which when we attend to the state or condition of the person detracted, or the small amount of evil which befalls him, may not amount to more than a venial sin.

(3) That the revelation be unjust—that is, when it is made without any necessity or utility.

(4) That the crime be secret, which is the case when the fault is not known by the notoriety of a law-court, or the notoriety of fact or report; that which is notorious by notoriety of law can, without sin, be talked about and told to others. The daily papers soon accomplish this; and it is also the more probable opinion that what is a notorious fact can in like manner be told to others who may not yet have heard it. To reveal what was once notorious, but which has been forgotten and buried in oblivion, would be a sin, especially if the person has repented and amended his life.

5. To manifest the fault of another is not a sin in the following cases:

(1) If it be ordained for the good of the person who has to speak of the matter—that is, to obtain counsel and assistance; or to relieve his mind in an affliction and sorrow a man may make such a revelation to a prudent friend or confessor. In such a case the crime of another is revealed for the just defence of one's self or one's neighbour. This is quite different from the sinful practice of those who take away a man's character, by the way, for his good, as they say—who talk about the faults of others for the sole purpose of telling faults, and hypocritically make up their conscience that they are speaking to superiors and ruining a

man's character *for his good.* How can it be for his good to take away a man's character?

(2) If done for the instruction of others, as a warning to them lest they be led into a like fault, or that they may take precautions against being seduced by the hypocrisy and by evil morals, or the society of the wicked. They may be told to avoid certain places and persons to save them from falling into evil ways.

(3) For the good of the delinquent; that is, when fraternal correction has failed, or when we know it will avail nothing, then the crime of another may be made known to his superior for the sake of remedy and correction. Thus, the faults of children for this purpose may be manifested to their parents, and the faults of servants to masters. We have also to speak out when it is our duty to do so to some third party. For instance, if we see a man robbing another, it is our duty to acquaint the person who is being robbed; for if we hold our tongue we become *a partaker of another man's sin.*

(4) If it be done for the good of the community or the good of the State. Thus, if a man conspires and plots by anarchy and rebellion against the State, or in any way that endangers the safety of the community, he can and ought to be denounced; and if an unworthy man is likely to be put into an office where he can do great injury to others, his fault should be made known, so that the community may be saved from his misgovernment, and from the influence of his evil example.

6. From the foregoing doctrine and principles we may draw the following conclusions:

(1) To make known a grave secret fault to one or two prudent men, even under secrecy, through mere levity and loquacity, would be a mortal sin according to the more probable opinion taught by St. Thomas.[1] St. Alphonsus calls the

[1] 22 Qu. 72, Art. 1, No. 2.

opposite opinions *satis probabilis*—as a man's fame consists in the common estimation of men, which is not taken away in this case.

(2) To narrate the crime of another as having heard it, but with one's own asseveration and confirmation and authority, so that the hearers may be more likely to give it credence, or that a bad impression may be made against the person by the narrative, would be a grave sin against justice; but to narrate it as having heard it, and as a mere rumour, and without any approbation or lending any authority to it, and without any intention to injure the party, would not be against justice; but even in these rumours and reports, and repeating what we have heard on hearsay, if the audience is likely to believe us, and a bad impression be made about the person detracted, the sin may be grave against charity, if not against justice.

(3) A man, having suffered defamation for one crime, cannot without injustice be subjected to defamation for another, either of the same or of a different species of sin. If he has lost his character for being a sober man, that is no reason to defame him by imputing theft and immorality to him by detraction or slander.

(4) A man receiving a secret either by promise or by commission cannot reveal it without sin; the sin for the most part is only venial if it be merely accepted by promise, but if by commission a secret be entrusted to a man—that is, entrusted to him by reason of his office as advocate, physician, or confessor—it would be a grave sin to reveal it, because a tacit agreement of silence with regard to secrets entrusted is understood between all professional men and their clients.

I may repeat that detraction is calumny when a crime is falsely imputed to another.

It is contumelious, in the theological sense, if a crime be

imputed to a man in his presence ; if the crime be true and secret, and imputed in the presence of others, the sin is both detraction and contumely: the former injures the reputation, the latter the honour, of our neighbour, and both may be mortal sins in their own species. The sin in such cases may be only venial if the matter be slight, or if the reproach be made for the sake of correction.

(5) Without a just cause, to consent to defamation or to defame one's self is of itself a sin (venial) of prodigality, and by accident it might be a sin (venial or mortal) against justice and against the charity due to ourselves and to our neighbour.

(6) Those listening to detraction, if they give any positive influence or co-operation towards it, *e.g.*, by laughing or otherwise externally showing their approval of it ; or if they omit, without a just cause, to impede the detraction when they are bound to do so by justice, *e.g.*, by reason of their office—in this double case they sin against justice and are bound to restitution. Those who listen to detraction, and take delight in it only internally, sin against charity, but are not bound to restitution. Those, again, who listen to detraction, and simply do not impede or stop it when they can and ought to do so, sin against charity. There are various ways of preventing detraction, but the best is to change the conversation to something else, which generally speaking can be done without giving offence. We have not, however, to be too ceremonious in our manner when a detractor has to be silenced.

7. Having explained the different ways in which the sin of detraction may be committed as taught by theologians, I think it well for the instruction of Christian people to notice special forms of this sin that are calculated to do so much mischief by creating and keeping alive in the minds of many a bad spirit of distrust and of prejudice.

(1) The first class of these to which I would call attention are 'busy-bodies' in other men's matters. Of these St. Paul speaks when he says: *For we have heard there are some among you who walk disorderly, working not at all, but curiously meddling.*[1] And again, in another Epistle, he says of certain women: *And withal being idle, they learn to go about from house to house; and are not only idle, but tattlers also and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.*[2]

'These tattlers often occasion much more than discomfort in society. There is doubtless a ridiculous side to their conduct, and if life itself were not a serious thing, we might afford to laugh at such trifling. But I would put the other side of the picture before you. Suppose one of these people, who, like the Athenians,[3] has nothing else but either to tell or to hear something new, after a day spent in inquiring and telling who is going there and who is coming here, what that one said and another answered, and so forth, were requested to sit down and write all this in a book, the ridiculous side of it would, I suspect, be quickly reversed if they could only be brought to realize the truth that these very words the recording angel has been writing also, to be kept until the judgment as a memorial of their day's work.'

(2) 'But there are busy-bodies more injurious than those triflers, who work, indeed, but work amiss; who must be continually intruding into other men's matters, and by mischievous interference, and by words which cost no trouble, do all they can to overthrow work which they have neither mind enough to comprehend nor heart enough to sympathize in. St. Paul thus admonishes them: *And that you use your endeavour to be quiet, and that you do your own business and work with your own hands as we commanded you.*[4]

[1] 2 Thess. iii. 11. [2] 1 Tim. v. 13. [3] Acts xvii. 21. [4] 1 Thess. iv. 11.

(3) '*Plain speaking* is another common way of breaking this commandment. It is the boast of some, "I am a very plain-spoken person; I tell people my mind"; and, upon the strength of this oft-repeated claim to a supposed virtue, they set themselves up as general reformers and licensed censors of morals, and, in this self-constituted capacity, often speak out their minds when it would be much better for themselves and for society that they should hold their tongues. That people are plain-spoken is no proof either of their sincerity or of their possessing qualifications for forming a correct judgment of other people's conduct; and if it were so, who gave them authority to judge their neighbours?'[1]

There is one other species of detraction to which I wish to draw special attention, inasmuch as it is a wide-spread evil in England. This I shall represent in the words of an author, from whom the above extract is quoted, Mr. R. Tudor, B.A., and on whose conduct in this particular aspect I shall have to comment, before I have done with him:

(4) 'Of all evil speaking and *bearing false witness against our neighbour*, none is more atrocious, and yet, perhaps, none more common, than sectarian detraction, religious party lies.

'There are those who, provided they can secure a party triumph, which, no doubt, many from their point of view honestly think to be the triumph of the truth, scruple not to misrepresent, to attribute evil motives to, and to blacken the private character of—ay, with bitter calumnies, to persecute to very death—those who, however they differ from them, are followers of the same Master and Saviour. Such people must, we take for granted, believe that Christ's cause is benefited by such a course of conduct, or they

[1] 'The Decalogue the Christian's Law.'

would not pursue it; yet it is hard to understand how they can suppose that He *Who is love* can be served by hatred and malice, emulations and strife; how they can imagine that He Who is truth can have fellowship with detractors; or how they can forget that the wrath of man worketh the righteousness of God.

'Detractor, in the name of Christ, behold then your work; the world estranged, the flock of God scattered, mangled and destroyed.'

Now, what I have here to notice is that the man who writes these words, in the very same lecture and a few pages further on of his book, falsifies and misrepresents what he calls the moral teaching of the Church of Rome. To this purpose he does not quote from her own standard books of theology or from any Catholic authority, but from a work reprinted from a Protestant journal of the period, entitled 'Moral Theology of the Church of Rome, reprinted from the *Christian Remembrancer*.' All the quotations he gives are gross misrepresentations of the teaching of the Catholic Church. They are so many slanderous utterances, not against one man only, but against the Saints, and doctors, and theologians, and priests of the Catholic Church; and one extract is a most uncalled-for and unwarrantable attack on the courts of justice in Spain, in Rome, and in Naples, which is false from beginning to end. The author is not satisfied with giving the quotations and extracts, but he goes on to confirm them by the expression of his own judgment in the following words: 'Rome, to prop up her system, has set her seal of justification upon every degree and every kind of lying. She began by confounding a human policy with the cause of God. She has ended by divorcing morality from religion.' This is the man who has otherwise written a useful and instructive volume on the Decalogue, who has condemned in the strongest terms

all manner of lying and detraction, and who had written in the same chapter the words: 'Detractor, in the name of Christ, behold then your work: the world estranged, the flock of God scattered,' etc. He is an argument against himself, and his own words must reproach him. They are here given intermingled with Scriptural quotations: 'It *used* to be said, *Behold how these Christians love one another!* now it would be more truly said, *See how these Christians hate one another!* Who is responsible for that taunt, think you? What, then, would you have us give up our principles? you ask. (Yes, if they are bad and wicked.) Never. But you need not hold the truth in unrighteousness; you need not use your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. The world we are to conquer is, believe me, a very shrewd judge of motive; it can at least detect the difference between selfish party spirit and the spirit of Christ Jesus, for these two are as wide asunder as the east is from the west; and the world will be won by the love of brethren, it will not be won by the heat of zealots. *By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love one for another.*[1] Love conquered the world at the first preaching of the Gospel; the emulation and strife and wrath which now reign among Christians are estranging the world: *He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.*[2] And how shall those who walk in darkness lead others to the light? For, *If the light that is in thee be darkness, the darkness itself how great shall it be!*[3] And again: *Can the blind lead the blind? Do they not both fall into the ditch?*[4]

There is another well-known writer concerning whom it is necessary to give a word of warning to all Christian

[1] St. John xiii. 35 [2] 1 St. John ii. 11. [3] St. Matt. vi. 23. [4] St. Luke vi. 39.

readers—that is, the late Dr. Littledale, who through his work entitled 'Plain Reasons against joining the Church of Rome' has been convicted of dishonest criticism, and of wilfully misrepresenting the teaching of the Catholic Church. Father Ryder, in his 'Introduction to Catholic Controversy,' says of him: 'All that I pretend to prove is, that Dr. Littledale has repeatedly asserted the thing that is not, with the evidence that it is not staring him in the face, and in cases, too, involving the gravest imputations upon the character of an adversary.' This charge Father Ryder has proved beyond the shadow of exception, and I therefore submit with him 'that a Christian society, or an honest individual, has no more right to patronize the controversial efforts of such an author, than a mercantile firm has to commend a man for the post of cashier, who, though they think him to *mean* honestly, they know steals.'

There is one other kind of this system of detraction and calumny tolerated and encouraged by many in England. That is calumniating nuns, convents, and religious houses generally—and this by people who have been proved over and over again to be unworthy of credence. This system of calumny becomes all the more effective if some Protestant Alliance can get some monks or nuns who have lost their vocation, and sometimes all self-respect as well, who would not wait or take the trouble to get lawfully dispensed from their vows, but would prefer to pose before the world as '*escaped nuns*' or runaway monks. They take the trouble to run away when anyone would let them out at the ordinary door when they wanted to go, and then go preaching before the world the sins of religious. Of these it may be said in the sense of Dr. Newman's words against Achilli: They themselves are their own argument, and it is limited to them. They are an argument, and a strong argument, too, that monks may fall and religious break their vows, but the

argument is limited to themselves, and cannot logically be extended to others.

8. It has been said that England, with all her shortcomings, among the nations of the world is a model of truthfulness. It does not belong to me to answer how far this is the case, or to give an answer to the various questions that might be asked on this head—*e.g.*, How is she truthful in religion? truthful in politics, in diplomacy? truthful in trade and commerce? truthful in literature and in social intercourse? One thing I can assert: She is the most willing country in the world to listen to lies against the Catholic Church, to spread calumnies against her teaching, and, regardless of all truth and decency, to slander convents and religious women. Who could honestly think for a moment that it was worth while to declaim against presumed abuses of the conventual system in these countries because some years ago, far away in America, or in Spain, or in some other distant part of the world, some unhappy religious ran away, and proclaimed that all the others were unhappy and persecuted? To impute the faults of individuals to others but themselves; to blame all married people, for instance, for the faults of a few married people; to blame all societies that are established, and all companies that are formed, for the faults of one company; to suppress all financial concerns, for example, because one financial bank or company is dishonest, is a line of argument that is manifestly unjust and absurd. So is it unjust and absurd and wicked to listen to the calumniators of the conventual and religious system of the Church. Any priest or honest layman who is acquainted with convents and religious and their work amongst the people cannot but know that the sanctity, the charity, and the devotion of nuns in this land, and in a Protestant atmosphere, are in accordance with the spirit of the first Christians in all evangelical perfection. With regard to the

attacks and calumnies against such religious persons, have our adversaries entirely forgotten the obligations of Christian charity? In common charity we cannot impute a fault to an individual unless we are certain of the truth of the accusation. It would be a crime against the law of charity, against the great commandment of God, to say, for example, without being convinced of the truth of the assertion, that such a man is a thief, that he has robbed us; that another man is a hypocrite, that his piety is hypocrisy; yet we hear similar accusations recklessly directed, not merely against individuals, but against whole bodies of men and women—accusations which are founded on hearsay evidence, on false bases, on false charges, on false prejudices, without ever taking the trouble to investigate their truth or falseness. The mere observance of the eighth commandment on this one point would enable many to do justice to those who had sacrificed themselves and the world in order to devote themselves entirely to the service of God and their neighbour.

9. Detraction begets the obligation of restitution, and those who have injured the character of another are bound to restore his good name as soon as possible.

He who has injured his neighbour's character by any of the above sins is obliged to restore his good name, for if one who wrongs his neighbour in his riches is obliged to restitution, how much more he who takes away his good name unjustly!—for *a good name is better than riches*. Now, this is a most difficult thing to do on many accounts, for it requires great humility indeed to retract what one has said, and even done; few will believe the retraction. Evil soon spreads, the retraction not so rapidly; and this consideration shows how mischievous is detraction.

They are bound under mortal sin to restitution who, in a grave matter and with a grave sin, have injured the repu-

tation of another, but only under venial sin when the injury is in a light matter and with a venial fault, either by reason of inadvertence or precipitancy. But one injuring grievously the reputation of another through inadvertence or precipitancy or want of deliberation, when he knows of it, should try as far as possible to remedy the evil; otherwise his act becomes voluntary, and imputable to the full amount of its guilt. If the detraction be real—that is, if the other person has suffered defamation or injury to his character—restitution is to be made by correcting the evil report in the best way possible, and so speaking of the defamed person that he may recover his good name and character in the estimation of those before whom he was detracted. If, however, a man utter a detraction, even with the purpose of injuring the character of another, but he is not believed and no injury has followed from it, or it is doubtful whether any injury has resulted from his words, as long as the doubt remains he is not bound to any compensation or restitution. One must openly retract what he has said in a case of calumny; or when a crime has been falsely imputed to another, either he must say that he had been led into error, and, if necessary, he must retract on oath and this he must do even though it may cost him some loss, either in goods, in character, or in life, equal to the injury done his neighbour; but he is not bound to do so at a greater loss to himself than that which his neighbour has suffered by reason of the calumny. Anyone inducing another to bear false testimony in a court of justice is bound to admonish the man to retract, and if he refuses to do so, he is bound at any risk to make known the matter to the judge, as long as he believes that his revelation will be useful or profitable. In the case of injuring another by manifesting a true but secret crime, all means should be used that may be considered necessary to remove the bad

impression made on the mind of the hearers—that is, on the immediate hearers (and on the mediate ones—namely, those who have heard it from others, and so on—when it is our intention that the evil report should be spread far and wide, otherwise no)—by saying that we have spoken badly and unjustly, and done an injury to another; but we cannot retract by telling a lie, namely, by saying that our report was untrue, as, in the supposition, our case is one in which the truth has been spoken. We might also, by way of restitution, say all the good we know of the person, and try by every other possible means to make restitution, even with a loss to ourselves, equal to, but not greater than the loss or injury which our detraction has caused to our neighbour.

These are some of the general rules laid down for our guidance in making restitution for defaming another. The obligation of this restitution is strict, and a person unwilling to make it cannot have his sin forgiven. In the case of a grave obligation of this kind, absolution would be invalid if the penitent has no intention to make restitution, just in the same manner as a man cannot be absolved who is unwilling to restore ill-gotten goods when he can do so.

10. There are causes which exempt from this obligation, such as moral and physical impossibility; its inutility; the lawful and free condonation of the person injured. When the defamation has been mutual in the sense that two have spoken evil of each other, and one is unwilling to retract and make restitution, the other can suspend making his restitution and compensation until his adversary is willing to offer his compensation and make amends. This cannot be understood ever in the sense that if a man has slandered me I can slander him, because that would be a sinful form of retaliation and revenge.

The obligation of restitution ceases: (1) When from the

detraction, the calumny, or the contumely, no injury has been done to the name or reputation or honour of our neighbour, either because the hearers did not believe the detractor, or they did not know the person detracted, or the detraction was immediately contradicted by another, so that no defamation followed from it. (2) When the man detracted and dishonoured has recovered his good fame and honour in some other way, either by justifying himself, or by the testimony of good men, or the sentence of a judge in his favour, or by the probity of his life, unless he may have suffered in temporal matters, when the obligation of restitution as to such matters would remain. (3) When the defamation has been in the course of time forgotten and buried in oblivion restitution is not necessary, as it might serve only to revive the old report, and do more harm than good. Some compensation, however, should be made to the man who has once been injured by our words, either by praising and speaking well of him before others, or showing him special marks of esteem and honour.

CHAPTER IV.

RASH JUDGMENTS, SUSPICIONS, AND THE VIOLATION OF A SECRET.

1. Rash judgment: its definition and explanation.
2. The different ways in which this sin is committed.
3. The nature of the sin of rash judgment—when mortal.
4. Rash suspicions and doubts.
5. Bishop Hay on the question—when is it lawful to judge another.
6. A secret: its nature and division. (1) Natural. (2) Entrusted. (3) Promised.
7. The obligation of a secret.
8. The just causes for making known a secret.
9. Seeking to know and find out secrets; opening and reading private letters.
10. Concluding remarks on this commandment.

ONE can defame one's neighbour in two ways: either in the minds of others by calumny and detraction, or in one's own mind by suspicions and rash judgments.

1. A rash judgment is a firm assent of the mind to believe some evil of our neighbour without a reasonable cause.

(1) It is an assent of the mind, by which it must be distinguished from a *rash suspicion*, which is an inclination to think evil of our neighbour without sufficient reason; and from a *rash doubt*, by which, on insufficient grounds, without giving entire assent, we doubt our neighbour's honesty

or integrity, either positively or by suspending our judgment in a negative and yet dubious manner.

(2) It is a *firm* assent—that is, forming a judgment in such a manner that, were we asked a question on the point, we would answer without any hesitation; and thus it differs from an opinion, by which we assent to a thing, but not without some fear of the opposite being true.

(3) *Some evil*—that is, either a natural or a moral evil, by which our neighbour's character would be injured or disgraced in our own mind.

(4) Without a *reasonable cause*, because if there be sufficient reason for the judgment it cannot be called *rash* or sinful. St. Thomas teaches that rash judgments, suspicions, and doubts arise chiefly from three causes: (1) Because the person judging rashly is bad-minded and bad himself; (2) because he is badly disposed towards his neighbour; or (3) from long experience of evil; hence old people are more suspicious than young people, because they have experience of the sins and defects of others, and have had probably to suffer more from trickery and deception.

'The conduct of the Pharisee in the Gospel is an instance of this vice; for, full of the vain idea he had conceived of his own excellence, he despised the poor publican, and condemned him without any other grounds than merely because he said he was a publican, contrary even to all the signs of sincere repentance which appeared in him; without any condescension to the frailty of human nature and the violence of passion and temptation; and hurried on through the blindness of his own pride and self-conceit.'

2. This sin may be committed in several ways:

(1) When we form a bad opinion, and conceive a dislike of anyone at first sight, and, without sufficient grounds, judge evil of him.

(2) When we attribute to a bad motive any good or

indifferent action of his, which may proceed from a good intention.

(3) When, upon seeing him commit anything sinful, we immediately, and without other reason, judge him to be addicted to that sin.

(4) When we judge his virtues or good dispositions to be vices, his humility mean-spiritedness, his meekness and patience cowardice, and his equanimity in bearing crosses to be constitutional apathy; thus, our Saviour says of the Pharisees: *John came neither eating nor drinkiug, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man that is a glutton, and a wine-drinker, a friend of publicans and sinners.*[1]

(5) When we presume rashly to judge another with regard to the future, as when we judge an habitual sinner to be a reprobate abandoned by God and that he will never be converted.

(6) When we rashly pronounce our neighbour guilty of what he is accused without hearing his defence.[2]

3. Rash judgment is a mortal sin of its own nature, and against charity and justice, because every man has a right to the good esteem of his fellow-men, and no one should be deprived of that without sufficient reason. Hence, the Scripture says *Judge not that you may not be judged; for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged.*[3] St. Paul repeats the same prohibition: *Judge not before the time, until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness.*[4] *Thou hypocrite*, says our Saviour, *cast out first the beam out of thy own eye, and then shalt thou see to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye.*[5] St. Paul furthermore says: *But thou, why judgest thou thy brother? or thou, why*

[1] St. Matt. xi. 18, 19.
[2] See Bishop Hay's 'Devout Christian,' ch. xviii.
[3] St. Matt. vii. 1, 2. [4] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [5] St. Matt. vii. 5.

dost thou despise thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ . . . therefore every one of us shall render account to God for himself; let us not, therefore, judge one another any more.[1]

That the sin of rash judgment be mortal, four conditions are required:

(1) That it be a true judgment, and not a mere imagination.

(2) That it be fully deliberate—that is, that the will deliberately consents after the intellect has understood the malice and rashness of the judgment.

(3) That it be in a grave matter, and about a determined and known person, not merely to judge that there is a bad man in a gang or community.

(4) That the judgment be founded only on slight conjectures, putting two and two together without any connecting link.

4. Rash suspicions and rash doubts are not of themselves mortally sinful, because they do not take away the character of our neighbour; together with them the good opinion and esteem may exist, although somewhat lessened. They may, however, sometimes be grievous, as, for example: (1) if they proceed from hatred and envy, which make us always take in a bad sense whatever we see in our neighbour. (2) If they cause externally an injurious effect, as in a case when a superior would out of rash suspicion punish a subject either by depriving him of office or denying him a vote, etc. (3) If it be manifested to others to the great detriment of our neighbour. (4) If the crime be so enormous, and the reasons so very light for suspecting, that the injured party would be caused great sorrow or grief even at the thought of being suspected of such a thing.

A *negative doubt* of a person's badness is no sin, because

[1] Rom. xiv. 10 *et seq.*

it does no injury to our neighbour. The maxim that doubts must be interpreted for the best or on the favourable side is to be understood negatively—that is, we have not to interpret them unfavourably or in the worst light; or it is to be understood in the case when we have to form a judgment, but not in a positive and absolute sense that we are bound to form good and favourable judgments of everyone.

We need not judge everyone, and we may abstain from judging some persons altogether, which is compatible with negative doubt.

To take precautions and to beware for our own sake and for the sake of others, lest our neighbour might be bad, is no sin, as this is neither to judge him nor positively to doubt him, but only to suppose that he can be bad, which is quite true, and in no sense injurious to him. Hence we can hide or lock up our purse or money because it might happen that a companion, a servant or neighbour might be a thief, although we don't judge him to be such.

5. Bishop Hay, answering the question, When we see strong proofs, is it not lawful to judge another guilty? says: 'It is lawful to judge according to proofs when they are well founded, and when the accused is heard in his own defence; but what appear strong proofs are often upon examination found fallacious, especially when the accused person comes to be heard in his own defence. The proud Pharisee thought he had proof to condemn the publican as a sinner, and yet he was a saint; the other Pharisee thought Mary Magdalen a great sinner, and yet she also at that time was a saint. He also judged that our Saviour could not be a prophet, because He allowed her, whom he considered a sinner, to touch Him; and yet how grievously was he mistaken! Joseph's master thought his wife's accusation a good proof of guilt, especially when she showed him his garment in her house; and yet Joseph was innocent. The

accusation and testimony of the two elders was thought sufficient proof of Susannah's guilt, and yet it was most fallacious. . . . These and similar examples show how little trust can be put in appearances, however convincing they may seem, and therefore how cautious we ought to be never to believe our neighbour guilty without a thorough examination, and without hearing what he has to say in his own defence. Indeed, so great is the wickedness of the world, that judgments even upon light grounds, to the prejudice of our neighbour, are too often really true ; but it is much better to judge well of a thousand undeserving people than to judge evil unjustly of one who does not deserve it. In the former case we run no hazard for our souls—nay, it is an act of charity which *thinketh no evil.* But in the latter we bring upon our souls the guilt of grievous sin; and in all cases where we judge rashly, we run the risk of being deceived, besides the sin of rash judgment.'

6. *Secrets.*—Before concluding the instructions on this commandment, we have to give some explanation on the obligation of keeping a secret, and its violation, as this is a thing which so often involves the character or good name of our neighbour.

A secret, in general, means something concealed, or a thing not discovered, and therefore unknown. Very often the knowledge itself of a secret thing is called a *secret.* Prescinding from the confessional secret or seal, a secret is threefold : (1) *Natural*—that is, when the thing itself is of such a nature that it should be kept concealed, as, for example, when a man sees or knows a thing which he cannot manifest without injury to his neighbour. (2) *The secret entrusted* or committed to another—that is, when a person is committed to not manifesting his official knowledge either expressly or tacitly, as is the case with doctors, lawyers, and theologians consulted on conscience cases.

(3) *The secret promised*—if a man promises not to reveal something which he already knows.

7. *The Obligation of a Secret.*—A *natural* secret in a grave matter obliges us under a grave sin, and that by the virtue of justice, unless a just cause excuses the manifestation of it. Hence, if by chance you know where a man has his money concealed, and you know and foresee that he will be robbed if you tell, in such a case your revelation would be a grave sin against justice, and you would be bound to restitution for the stolen goods or money.

A *promised* secret obliges according to the manner in which the person making the promise wishes to bind himself, either by justice or fidelity; and a revelation of such a secret would not of itself amount to more than a venial sin.

An *entrusted* secret of itself in a grave matter obliges under mortal sin and out of justice, on account of the onerous contract that exists in such a case. I suppose that the revelation be made without a just cause. Hence superiors making visitations of religious houses would sin grievously by revealing either directly or indirectly the persons who make known to them the defects and abuses to be corrected; because the consequences of such a revelation would be evil, and defects would no longer be made known nor abuses corrected. In the same way, electors in Chapters cannot directly or indirectly reveal the secrets of the Chapter, or say to a disappointed candidate, 'I said so-and-so were not against you,' thus giving a clue as to those that were opposed to him, from which may arise discords and aversions, and the sin would be still greater in case of making such revelation to secular friends.

8. The just causes for manifesting a secret are:

(1) The consent lawfully presumed of the person concerned in the secret or in its keeping.

(2) When it is otherwise divulged.

(3) If the secret be to the common danger, according to the order of charity it can and ought to be revealed, even though it be a secret that one has sworn to keep. Hence, if you know under a secret of an impediment of matrimony, and you cannot get the party to reveal it or to desist from the marriage, you are bound to make it known, in order to impede the sin and save the reverence to the Sacrament, as well as to prevent the injury to an innocent person in a case where one of the parties is ignorant of it.

(4) If it be to one's own injury or danger. Hence, I am not bound to keep a secret at the peril of my life or my future, or at the risk of some other great evil to befall me, unless the revelation might be to the great injury of the community, and then a soldier could not, even to avoid great torments or the danger of death, reveal the secrets of the State or of the army to the enemy, because the common good must be preferred to one's own private advantage.

If, however, you promise to keep a secret even at the cost of your life, you are bound to keep it under grave injuries, and some say even at the peril of your life, if it be in a matter of very great moment, otherwise it would be a prodigal promise, and therefore not binding. This would seem to me to be a rather prodigal promise for anyone to make seriously.

Whether one is bound to reveal a secret if asked officially by a judge or superior? The answer to this question is to be given in the affirmative if it be only a promised secret, but in the negative if it be an entrusted secret. In this last case the man to whom the secret is entrusted should not reveal it. He may give an evasive answer or use a mental reservation, in the sense explained in Chapter II., by saying that *he does not know*—that is, he does not know for the

purpose of revealing it—otherwise there would not be sufficient protection for obtaining necessary advice or help, as people, for fear of revelation, would not trust even professional men in the discharge of their duties.

9. To seek to know and find out secrets, if done simply, and without malice or fraud, would not be a sin against justice; but to do so maliciously and without a just cause, or to try to extort secrets, would be sinful, inasmuch as everyone has a right to his secret.

Hence, he sins against justice who opens another person's letters and reads them, except: (1) When there is at least the tacit or presumed consent of the person who writes the letter or the person to whom it is addressed. (2) When it is known and presumed that the letter contains nothing of importance. (3) When there is a just cause, as, for example, to guard against a public or private calamity; thus, in time of war a king or ruler may open the letters of the enemy, or any letters coming from his territory. Superiors of religious houses have the power of opening the letters of their subjects, unless written by or to higher superiors. (4) When letters are opened and read through levity or through want of advertence, there may not be any sin in the matter.

10. By way of calling attention to the important question of keeping a secret, I shall give one extract from the writings of Dr. Newman, with which I may conclude my instructions on this commandment.

'A more difficult question is, when to accept confidence has not been a duty. Supposing a man wishes to keep secret that he is the author of a book, and he is plainly asked a question on the subject. Here I should ask the previous question, Whether anyone has a right to publish what he dare not avow? It requires to have traced the bearings and results of such a principle before being sure of it; certainly, for myself I am no friend of strictly anonymous

writing. Next, supposing an author has confided to you the secret of his authorship—there are persons who would have no scruple at all in giving a denial to impertinent questions asked on the subject. I have heard of a great man in his day at Oxford warmly contend, as if he could not enter into any other view of the matter, that if he had been trusted by a friend with the secret of his being the author of a certain book, and he were asked by a third person if his friend was not (as he really was) the author of it, he ought, without any scruple, and distinctly, to answer he did not know. He had an existing duty towards the author; he had none towards the inquirer. The author had a claim on him. But here, again, I desiderate some leave recognised by society, as in the case of the formulas "Not at home" and "Not guilty," in order to give me the right of saying what is a manifest untruth. And, moreover, I should here also ask the previous question, Have I any right to accept such a confidence?—(why not?). Have I any right to make such a promise (of course), and, if it be an unlawful promise, is it binding when it cannot be kept without a lie? I am not attempting to solve these difficult questions, but they have to be carefully examined.'[1]

The author of 'The Decalogue the Christian's Law,' speaking of the positive side of this commandment, truthfulness, says:

'The Apostle gives us this command: *Putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbour.*[2] Some difficulty, it may be admitted, does surround the question, "What is truth?" Yet, whatever sophists . . . may say to the contrary, the answer to another question is simple enough: "What is truthfulness?" or, put it in a yet plainer form, "Who is truthful?" Here is the ready answer: *He that walketh without blemish, and worketh*

[1] 'Apologia,' Note 9. [2] Eph. iv. 25.

justice; he that speaketh truth in his heart, who hath not used deceit in his tongue.[1] He that lets his lips ever go with his heart; he who, whether it be in theology, in science, in literature, in art, in business, in society, in his family, in his every capacity, in his life, loves the truth, seeks the truth, and has faith in the truth.

'More than eighteen hundred years ago Pilate put this question to our Saviour: *What is truth?*[2] Along the whole course of these centuries the world is still reiterating the question, and now its demands are made more arrogantly and confidently than ever. Yet, above all the discordant clamour of friends and supposed friends, and the loud defiant cries of openly-declared enemies, one voice still sounds forth, pure, calm, and clear: *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*'[3]

[1] Psa. xiv 2, 3. [2] St. John xviii. 38. [3] St. John xiv. 6.

THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS.

1. The end and design of these commandments, and why treated together.

2. These two commandments not identical.

3. These commandments considered as the seal which attests the Divine origin of the Decalogue.

4. The necessity of the promulgation of these two commandments.

5. The outward act one and the same moral act as the inward act of the mind. It may add to its malice in a threefold way.

6. The malice and sinfulness of internal acts.

7. Sins of thought and desire more dangerous to the soul than outward sins because of—(1) The facility of committing them. (2) The facility with which they are multiplied. (3) The difficulty to know and discern them.

8. Every sin must proceed from our free will as its cause. This will can either—(1) Consent to its object; (2) resist it; or (3) remain passive.

9. The kinds of internal sins: (1) Morose delectation. (2) Joy and delight. (3) Desire.

10. The delectation in sin more fully explained, and some questions on the subject answered.

11. Concupiscence: as explained by the Catechism of the Council of Trent not always sinful.

12. When its motions have to be resisted; when sinful, and to what extent.

13. Human affections not bad in themselves, but holy and sacred if properly directed, illustrated by a description of human love, proved by the authority of the Catechism of the Council of Trent.

14. The means to preserve us from sins of thought, and the remedies against sinful concupiscence.

15. The teaching with regard to the morality of our thoughts and affections, illustrated and proved by extracts from the letters of the pious and learned Rev. J. Balmez.

THE ninth commandment is: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.*

The tenth: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.*

1. With regard to the end and design of these commandments, we have already seen that they principally regard sins of lust and injustice, and we have considered them in that light along with the sixth and seventh commandments. But, besides, they are also designed to direct us in the care we ought to have over our hearts, in avoiding evil thoughts, and employing our minds on good objects.

We treat of these two commandments together because God gave them thus united, although they are two distinct commandments. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.*[1] The reason of their thus being joined together is the great analogy and resemblance that exists between them for this one reason: that they both forbid interior sins of thought, of desire, and of affection—in a word, covetousness. *Thou shalt not covet.*

2. Although they resemble each other in this respect, the two commandments are not identical. Their resemblance consists in forbidding covetousness, and their difference in forbidding different kinds of covetousness. The ninth forbids the covetousness of the flesh, the tenth the covetousness of avarice. A person who sins against the ninth seeks to gratify a dishonest and impure pleasure, and a person who sins against the tenth seeks a temporal advantage of interest, of profit, or of gain. It is therefore reasonable that these two commandments should be kept distinct, and not confused into one, according to the Protestant arrangement of the Decalogue; and their objection that there are many more concupiscences forbidden than that of our *neighbour's wife* and our *neighbour's goods* only shows that they do not consider the formal object of these commandments. The

[1] Exod. xx. 17.

formal object of the ninth is all desires against the virtue of purity, expressly: *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife;* the formal object of the tenth embraces all desires contrary to justice in property; and although servant and handmaid are expressly mentioned, it is clear that they are only considered in the relations of justice as they are hired, and their work by contract belongs to their masters. Certainly they have not to be considered in the same relations as those of husband and wife in the meaning and prohibition of the commandment.

3. These last two commandments may be considered as the seal which attests the Divine origin of the whole Decalogue. In order to forbid and command, we must suppose the power to enforce what is forbidden or commanded, otherwise the law will remain a dead letter. Thus, we see that all human legislation is ordained to regulate the external actions of men; and human laws are not directed against the thoughts and desires of men, because no human power could enforce such laws. But as the Decalogue regulates the interior as well as the exterior acts of men, it is a proof that it has come from Him Who can know our secret acts and Who is the Searcher of hearts, and Who will punish or reward us for our interior acts and desires, as well as for our external words and actions.

God had already forbidden impurity and theft by the sixth and seventh commandments; yet we find Him expressly forbidding the thoughts and desires of the heart with regard to these sins. This may need some explanation, because it is certain of all the other precepts of the Decalogue, that, by prohibiting the outward act of sin, they likewise prohibit the inward propension and desire of the soul towards it, and yet we find the explicit precepts with regard to the inward sins of impurity and theft. The reason of this is that we might the better understand the full meaning

and import of God's law. He well knew that the best means to keep men from committing sins in act would be to keep them from desiring them in heart, and therefore He who is a Spirit imposeth a law upon our spirits or minds, and forbids us to covet what before He had forbidden us to perpetrate.

4. The Catechism of the Council of Trent, speaking of the necessity of the promulgation of these two commandments, says: 'Of these two commandments the promulgation was necessary for two reasons. The first is to explain the sixth and seventh, for although reason alone is competent to inform us, that to prohibit adultery is also to prohibit the desires of another man's wife, because, were the desire lawful, its indulgence must be so too; yet, blinded by sin, many of the Jews could not be induced to believe that such desires were prohibited by God. Nay, even after the promulgation, and with a knowledge of this law, many who professed themselves its interpreters continued in the same error, as we learn from these words of our Lord recorded in St. Matthew: *You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery: but I say to you, that whosoever shall see a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.*[1] The second reason for the promulgation of these two commandments is that they distinctly, and in express terms, prohibit some things of which the sixth and seventh commandments contain but an implied prohibition. The seventh commandment, for instance, forbids an unjust desire or endeavour to take what belongs to another; but this prohibits even to covet it, on any account; although we may, without a violation of law or justice, obtain possession of that from which we know a loss must accrue to our neighbour.'[2]

[1] St. Matt. v. 27, 28.

[2] Ninth and Tenth Commandments.

5. I may add that God gives the commandments explicitly, without regard to thoughts and desires of lust and avarice, because we must understand that an outward act constitutes with the inward act of the mind or of the will, of which it is the execution, one and the same moral act, and it has no formal goodness or badness distinct from that which is in the inward act.

Hence, an outward act *of itself* does not superadd a formal goodness, or malice to an inward efficacious act.

I have said *of itself*, for it can by accident, and under some other account, add goodness to an act, by reasons of some special privilege or special effect annexed to the external acts, as in the reception of a Sacrament, in suffering martyrdom, in satisfactory work, in gaining an indulgence, etc.

In like manner, by accident and occasionally, it can add to the *malice* of an inward act, and this may happen in a threefold manner, according to St. Thomas: by reason of the outward act, the inward one is (1) often multiplied (2) it is more intended and more intense as a rule; and (3) it continues longer. Besides, an outward act brings with it scandal, the obligation of restitution, and sometimes an ecclesiastical censure.

Again, although an outward act is not bad except by the malice of the inward act, it must, however, be expressed in confession: (1) Because the sin in confession must be told whole and entire in all its deformity; (2) because, as I have said, the external act adds by accident some malice to the internal act.

6. From this we can learn the malice and sinfulness of internal acts when the will consents to unlawful thoughts and desires.

Whatever is a sin to do or to speak is likewise a sin to consent to in thought; and our Saviour says: *From the*

heart cometh forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies: these are the things that defile a man.[1] That is, these various sins have their seat, properly speaking, in the heart, and their malice consists precisely in the consent of the will.

When this consent is given, the sin is immediately committed before God, and the soul defiled by it; hence, our Saviour says again: *I say that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.*[2] And the Scripture says: *Evil thoughts are an abomination to the Lord;*[3] and *perverse thoughts separate from God.*[4] The sin of the angels was a sin of thought only; and, indeed, many of the most grievous sins men commit are sins of thought, and completed in the heart, as pride, envy, and hatred, the outward actions being only the effects they produce.

7. These interior sins of thought and desire are far more dangerous to the soul than outward sins of action. (1) Because, in the first place, they are committed with much greater facility. To commit a sin of action is not always so easy. One must have time and place, and seek for opportunity and occasion, and also consider the results and the consequences; but to commit a sin of thought there is no obstacle or difficulty in the way. It may be committed in a moment of time and in any place, and no dishonour or trouble need result from it.

(2) Again, sins of thought and desire are more dangerous on account of the facility with which they can be multiplied. A person may commit more sins of thought in one day than of actions in twelve months. For one external sin, say, against charity, a hundred sins of hatred and revenge may be committed in the heart; and therefore we may consider the terrible state of habitual sinners when we know

[1] St. Matt. xv. 19, 20. [2] *Ibid.* v. 28. [3] Prov. xv. 26. [4] Wisd. i. 3.

how active the human mind is, and how, if we do not supply it with good reflections, it will be sure to find evil ones for itself, and to occupy itself with dishonest, impure, and impious thoughts and desires.

(3) There is yet another consideration that may impress us with the great danger to be feared from interior sins, namely, the difficulty to know and discern them. In the case of external sins, such as calumny, blasphemy, sacrilege, theft, etc., one can easily recognise their guilt, for of themselves they inspire horror; but it is not so easy to recognise the guilt of interior sins, because they are spiritual, and on that account hidden from observation. They may therefore easily escape our examens and our confessions. Sometimes real sins may be considered only as temptations, and therefore they are maladies that are most difficult to cure: just as the internal diseases of the body are more dangerous because hidden and unknown.

The facility, the multitude, and ignorance of these sins are the three qualities that render them more dangerous to the soul than exterior acts; and as the result of these three characters the habit of sin may be more easily contracted—a habit which gives the devil more power over us, and which may enable him at the moment of death, when no longer able to sin by action, to obtain a last victory over us and effect our eternal ruin.

We have, however, in treating of this subject to state distinctly that only voluntary bad thoughts and desires are sinful.

8. Although not every sin is in the will, as in its immediate subject, in such a way that it is immediately elicited by the will—*e.g.*, an act of heresy which is immediately elicited by the intellect—every sin is in the will as in its cause; and there can be no sin which does not proceed from our free will. Hence, what is called by theologians the *motus primo*

primus is not a sin—that is, the first impressions of an evil thought, the imperfect embryo of sin before it takes any shape or receives any encouragement. These are what the Scripture calls the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts.[1]

The human will is free, and when an object is presented to it it can either (1) consent to it, and then, if the object be evil, it becomes guilty of sin; or (2) it can *resist*—that is, it can absolutely refuse to take the course indicated when the conscience has pointed out that such a course is contrary to what God has ordered; or (3) it may remain *passive*, neither consenting nor resisting. But on this last point we may refer to the Catholic doctrine of free-will. This contributes more than is imagined to develop and perfect the individual, to raise his ideas of independence, nobleness, and dignity. When man is conscious of his liberty, then he knows that he is master of his destiny; good and evil, life and death, are before his eyes; he can choose, and nothing can violate the sanctity of his conscience. There the soul is enthroned, there she is seated, full of dignity, and the whole world raging against her, the universe falling upon her fragile body, cannot force her will. The moral order is displayed before us in all its grandeur; we see good in all its beauty, and evil in all its deformity; the desire of doing well stimulates, and the fear of doing ill restrains, us; the sight of the recompense which can be obtained by an effort of free will, and which appears at the end of the path of virtue, renders that path more sweet and peaceful, and communicates activity and energy to the soul. If man is free, there remains something great and terrible, even in his crime, in his punishment, and even in the despair of hell. If man is free, when he suffers he suffers because he has deserved it; and if we contemplate him in the

[1] Gen. vi. 5.

midst of despair, plunged into an ocean of horrors, his brow furrowed by the just lightnings of the Eternal, we seem to hear him still pronounce those terrible words with a haughty bearing and proud look, *Non serviam*—I will not obey.

The Catholic notion of free-will has given man the true knowledge which he has of himself, the appreciation of his dignity, the respect which is paid him as man; this it is that should develop in our souls the germs of the noblest and most generous feelings, as it raises our thoughts to the loftiest conceptions, dilates our hearts by the assurance of a liberty which nothing can take away, as we are reminded of the promise of an infinite reward—eternal happiness—that God has put before us life and death, and has made us in a certain manner arbiters of our own destiny.[1]

9. To explain more particularly the doctrine with regard to inward sins, we must adopt the division of these sins into three kinds:

(1) *Morose delectation*, or the free complacence in an evil thought as present to the imagination, without any desire to do the thing—a voluntary complacency in an illicit object which may be opposed to charity or purity or any other virtue.

(2) *Joy or delight*, which is the deliberate approbation of a bad deed done either by ourselves or another, by which the will is gratified with the evil perpetrated. This joy or delight respects the past.

(3) *Desire*, which is an act of the will to do or obtain something evil and sinful. It is called efficacious if there is the absolute resolution of doing the thing, inefficacious if there is only a conditional consent given, as, for example, I would steal if I could, or I would break the sixth commandment were it not that I would bring disgrace upon myself. The morose delectation is occupied with the object

[1] See Balmez, 'European Civilization.'

as it presents itself *hic et nunc* to the mind. Joy and desire are occupied with the object under the circumstance in which it happened or is to happen.

A *desire* of evil, even though *inefficacious*, is really a sin, and is vested with the special guilt of the object desired, together with the circumstances. The reason of this is because to desire either absolutely or conditionally to do that which it is dishonest and wicked to do is sinful. And such a desire or wish takes its malice from the object desired, and includes also the malice of the circumstances, inasmuch as that also is desired and wished for. Hence, in the desire of a sin of impurity, the circumstances as to whether the person is married or single, a relation or one bound by a vow of chastity, should be mentioned in the tribunal of penance.

Joy and delight about a sin already committed is also a sin, and of the same kind or species as the bad action itself, together with all its circumstances, as I have said of the sin of desire, because pleasure arising from the consideration of a past sin amounts to an approbation of it. Therefore, in confessing a sinful thought of this kind we must explain the circumstance which may change the nature of the sin as to the person or thing which was the object of the sinful pleasure. To this kind of joy we should add boasting of a sin committed, regret because some sin was not committed, and sorrow for having done a good act. What is called *morose delectation* is certainly a sin, and of the same kind as the evil object on which the mind dwells and takes delight. The reason is because it is against right reason and the law of God to allow the will to be pleased and gratified with that which is displeasing to God Besides, deliberate delectation in a sinful object argues an affection towards that object, and such an affection or voluntary inclination is bad according to the words of the

prophet speaking of the people of Israel: *They became abominable as those things were which they loved.*[1]

This delectation, according to many theologians, does not contract the malice of the circumstances of the object, or that may surround the evil action, which is the object of the thought, because a mere delectation does not tend to the object as it really exists, but only rests upon it as it is in the phantasy or imagination.

10. The delectation is called *morose* from the Latin *mora*, which signifies slow or tardy; not that it requires any length of time to contract the guilt, but only that there be sufficient time to advert to the malice of the act, and deliberately to consent to it. As this delectation, which may be occupied with any of the vices and sins, as well as impurity, involves many difficulties of conscience, I may refer to some special cases that may serve to explain the matter more fully.

(1) It may be asked whether morose delectation about the knowledge, the thought, or the manner of an evil thing is sinful. As I have already said, the knowledge of evil is not in itself evil, but the thought of it is dangerous, as it is easy to pass from the thought and the reflection to taking pleasure in the evil object, so that it is often difficult to discern the knowledge and thought from the pleasure itself. Take for example the thought of revenge.

(2) Is the delectation sinful when it is about something evil, but abstracts entirely from its being prohibited? To this we answer that, if it be something prohibited by the natural law and intrinsically evil, then the delectation is sinful; but if it be about an object which is prohibited only by the positive law, then it may abstract from the prohibition, and may not be sinful.

The same distinction must be given in answer to the

[1] Osee ix. 10.

question whether delectation about a thing that is only *materially* bad is sinful. Thus, delectation over involuntary homicide is sinful, but not according to many if it be about the involuntary eating of meat on a fast-day.

The same distinction may also be applied to the case of delectation in evil, because of the good which comes from it. This is unlawful if the evil be against the law of nature, but lawful if only prohibited by positive law, provided the mind abstracts from the prohibition. Finally, it may be asked whether the complacency in evil under the condition if it were not evil would be sinful? And in answer to this we have to make use of the same distinction. If the thing is prohibited by the law of nature and intrinsically evil, the delectation, if it only denotes an act of the understanding or intellect, does not appear to be sinful; but if it denotes an act of the will, as it usually does, then it is sinful; but if the thing is only prohibited by the positive law, such a conditional complacency is not sinful. This also applies to the *desire* that something which is evil should not be so. If it be an evil of the natural law, that desire would be a sin, and if a serious desire it would, according to some others, be worse than a simple transgression of the law of nature; but if the evil arise only from the prohibition of the positive law, such a desire would not be a sin. On this point it may seem that I have said too much on mere questions of casuistry, but anyone that has to do with the direction of souls will understand that such questions are not pure questions of casuistry, but affect the spiritual progress of many persons who are anxious to avoid sin and to keep their hearts pure in the sight of God.

11. With the thoughts of the mind we have to connect the motions of concupiscence that may be excited either by external causes or objects, or by internal causes, namely, by the phantasy or imagination, or by the particular disposition

or passions of the individual. It need not always be referred to carnal matters. According to the Catechism of the Council of Trent, 'concupiscence is a certain commotion and impulse of the mind, urging to the desire of pleasure which it does not actually enjoy; and as the other propensities of the soul are not always sinful, neither is the impulse of concupiscence. It is not, for instance, sinful to desire meat and drink, when cold to wish for warmth, when warm to wish to be cold. This species of concupiscence was originally implanted in the human breast by the Author of nature, but, in consequence of primeval prevarication, it passed the limits prescribed by nature, and became so depraved that it frequently excites to the desire of those things which conflict with the spirit and are repugnant to reason However, if well regulated and kept within proper bounds, it is still the source of many blessings to the world.'[1]

12. These motions when inordinate have to be resisted by the will when one adverts to them, by an act of displeasure, either explicit or at least *implicit*, namely, by despising them or not heeding them, but attending to other duties. It is not sufficient to hold one's self in a *negative* manner towards such motions, inasmuch as this may be a tacit consent; and the sin may be grave if there be a proximate danger of our consenting to a grave sin.

There may be just reasons for permitting such motions, as, for example, duties of study, of the medical profession, duties of charity or piety, even; but there should always, according to St. Alphonsus, be the actual care or caution taken of not consenting to them.[2]

These motions when fully voluntary and directly wished are mortally sinful according to the sinful malice of their

[1] Ninth and Tenth Commandments.
[2] See St. Alphonsus de sexto et nono præcep., No. 484.

own nature in regard to the sixth commandment. They may be only venial, however, when voluntary only in their cause, and the cause (1) is only venially evil, when not of itself tending to or influencing in any proximate manner to luxury: or (2) when the motions are not so grave as to amount to anything serious against the virtue of chastity. Two things are therefore required that these motions may be considered mortally sinful: (1) That the cause be calculated to lead to such sins either of itself or by accident, on account of the special weakness or disposition of the person; or (2) that the motions be grave and inordinate. They must come from a cause *per se* mortal, and in matters opposed to chastity (*in genere luxuriæ*).

13. These commandments, then, which forbid evil concupiscence, must not be taken to mean that our human affections are in themselves vile, for they may be most holy and sacred, and it is because they are holy and sacred that their perversion is often so sinful. These commandments do not say, Thou shalt not encourage desire and hope and love in thy heart; on the contrary, all the affections of the mind and heart are good unless perverted. They may all be turned to the aid of virtue and holiness. More souls are gained to God and kept in the way of virtue and holiness by the affections of the heart than by the logic of the intellect; and we may take the leading and the strongest affection of the heart, that of love—even human love, when not illicit or inordinate, but subordinate to the love of God—and represent it as having all the good qualities attributed to it by writers of romances and songs.

It has been said that when this passion comes to man or woman the soul passes, as it were, into a new life, and feels as though only now it had begun to live; that in the complete surrender of one's life to another, the soul becomes conscious for the first time of its true self, and

discovers unsuspected capacities. We are sometimes told not to sneer at what are called the delusions of young lovers; that their fancies are probably much truer than the soberest judgments of men whose hearts have grown prosaic and cold; that they are not blind to each other's faults, but that their love has made them clear-sighted to see in each other, not only all actual virtues, but all latent possibilities of virtue; and it is this, some say, which fills those sunny hours with so strange and perfect a joy. One writer exclaims: 'Do not tell me that such experiences are follies and delusions. Which, after all, is the truest and deepest estimate of a man, that which is based upon his actual imperfections and failures, or that which penetrates through all these and sees only the Divine idea of the man, the glorious strength and incorruptible truth and stainless purity and unselfish devotion which are possible in him?' And he goes on to say: 'So far from regarding this early extravagance of affection, if so it must be called, as a folly to be sneered at, and as resting on delusions that should be got rid of and forgotten as soon as possible, I think the only pity is that it does not last much longer, and that the romance and poetry of courtship often disappear as soon as the days of courtship are over.' All this sounds very well, and may be very true; but we must not be carried away by these ideas to such an extent as to forget the Catholic principle of repression expressed by the pious Balmez in answer to the question, What plan should be adopted to restrain the passion, and confine it within just limits, and prevent its bringing misfortune to individuals and confusion to society? 'The invariable rule of Catholicity, in the morality which it teaches, as well as in the institutions which she establishes, is *repression*. Catholicism does not allow an unlawful desire. She declares to be culpable in the eyes of God, even a look when accom-

panied by an impure thought. Why this severity? For two reasons: on account of the intrinsic morality which there is in this prohibition, and also because there is profound wisdom in stifling the evil at its birth.

'It is certainly easier to prevent a man's consenting to evil desires, than it is to hinder his gratifying them when he has allowed them to enter his inflamed heart. There is profound reason in securing tranquillity to the soul by not allowing it to remain, like Tantalus, with the water at his burning lips. *Quid vis videre quod non licet habere?* Why do you wish to see that which you are forbidden to possess? is the wise observation of the Author of the "Imitation of Christ," thus summing up in a few words all the prudence which is contained in the holy severity of the Christian doctrine.'[1]

Well-regulated affections in a faithful and loving soul may be the source of many advantages and of many blessings, which are clearly referred to in the sober language of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, speaking of the concupiscence that is well regulated and kept within proper bounds:

'In the first place, it prompts us by fervent prayer to supplicate God, and humbly to beg of Him those things which are the objects of our most fervent desires. Prayer is the interpreter of our wishes; and did not this well-regulated concupiscence exist within us, Christians would not so often address the Giver of all good gifts in prayer. It also imparts in our estimation a higher value to the gifts of God; the pleasure derived from the realization of our wishes, and the value which we set on the objects which we pursue, are proportioned to their intensity; and the gratification which we thus receive from the desired object serves also to increase our devotion and gratitude to God.

[1] Balmez, 'European Civilization.'

If, then, it is at any time lawful to covet, it will be readily conceded that every species of concupiscence is not forbidden. St. Paul, it is true, says that *concupiscence is sin*,[1] but his words are to be understood in the same sense as those of Moses whom he cites,[2] a sense conveyed by the Apostle himself when, in his Epistle to the Galatians, he calls it the *concupiscence of the flesh. Walk in the Spirit, and you will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.*[3] The natural well-regulated concupiscence, therefore, which passes not its proper limits, is not prohibited; still less is that spiritual desire of the virtuous mind, which prompts to those things that are against the flesh, and to which the Sacred Scriptures exhort us: *Covet ye my words.*[4] *Come over to me, all ye that desire me.*[5] It is not, then, the mere motion of concupiscence, directed equally as it may be to a good or a bad object, that is prohibited by these commandments: it is the indulgence of criminal desire, which is called the *concupiscence of the flesh* and the *fuel of sin*, and which when it sways the assent of the mind is always sinful. That which the Apostle calls the *concupiscence of the flesh* is alone prohibited—that is to say, those motions of corrupt desire that outstep the limits prescribed by God.'[6]

14. We have now to refer to the means to preserve us from sins of thought, and the remedies against sinful concupiscence.

The particular remedies against concupiscence may be arranged according to the causes of this evil. Remove the causes as far as possible. This may be done (1) by removing dangerous objects and avoiding dangerous occasions. (2) By dispelling imaginations, especially by applying the mind to some other considerations. (3) By overcoming our passions and evil inclinations by self-denial and mortification.

[1] Rom. vii. 20. [2] Exod. xx. 17. [3] Gal. v. 16. [4] Wisd. vi. 12.
[5] Ecclus. xxiv. 26. [6] Catech. Conc. Trid., *in loco.*

The following means are enumerated and explained by Bishop Hay:

(1) A constant vigilance or guard over the heart, that no evil may enter there to hurry us away before we are aware: *With all watchfulness keep thy heart, because life issueth out from it.*[1]

(2) Resolutely to cast away all evil thoughts on first observing them, as we throw off a spark of fire that falleth on our clothes.

(3) Immediately to turn our thoughts to Jesus Christ upon the Cross, and with humble and fervent prayer to beg His help against them if they prove obstinate.

(4) To renounce them with contempt and disregard, and make acts of the contrary virtues.

(5) But the most effectual preservation against them is to walk in the presence of God, and employ our minds, as much as possible, upon pious and good objects, which will exclude evil thoughts and bring down a great blessing from God. *My son*, says He, *give Me thy heart, and let thy eyes keep My ways.*[2] *Have confidence in the Lord with all thy heart, and lean not upon thy own prudence. In all thy ways think on Him, and He will direct thy steps.*[3]

15. I wish to conclude my instructions on these two commandments with one or two extracts from the letters of the pious and learned Balmez, which illustrate and prove the doctrine contained in the course of my instructions:

'Well, now, in the depths of the human soul there is a spring of activity which increases with the exercise of the different faculties: the understanding, the will, the imagination, the heart, require pabulum to devour; whilst man lives, his faculties live with him; it would be vain to endeavour to smother them; what should be done is to moderate and direct them, subordinate the less to the more noble, and take care the expansion and energy of the latter

[1] Prov. iv. 23. [2] *Ibid.* xxiii. 26. [3] *Ibid.* iii. 5, 6.

do not allow the former to trespass the limits prescribed by reason and morality. Indulgence with bad passions and dangerous instincts, far from producing a *salutary alleviation*, would raise tempestuous storms in the heart, and extinguish all discipline. . . .

'It is a fundamental fact, constantly observed, that the activity of our faculties expends from a common fund, and that the increase of strength in one generally entails a diminution in the others. It is not possible to have the same degree of activity in many senses, and hence has sprung the proverb of the School: *Pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus.* When the animal faculties have a great development, the intellectual and moral ones suffer from debility; and, on the contrary, when the superior part of man, the understanding and will, are developed with great energy, the passions grow weak and lose their empire over his conduct. Great thinkers have almost always been distinguished by their neglect of the pleasures of life, and those given to sensuality are rarely distinguished by the elevation of their thoughts. If a man is domineered over by brutal passions, he loses that delicacy of feeling which makes one perceive ineffable beauties in the moral, and even in the physical, world; and a continued exercise of exquisite and pure sentiments, which, escaping from the sphere of common sensibility, appear to touch on the regions of an ideal world, is opposed to the developments of the grosser passions which defile the soul with their impure mire.

'You will have already comprehended the drift of these observations. . . .

'The imagination requires spectacles with which to enjoy itself; the heart needs objects to excite its love; if it does not find them within the bounds of virtue, it will seek them in those of vice, and the flame undirected towards God will

turn towards the creature. Do you think a heart like St. Teresa's could live without loving? If it had not been consumed with the purest flames of Divine love, it would have been burnt with the impure fire of earthly affection. Instead of an angel that excites the admiration of infidels themselves, who have by chance read some of her admirable pages, perhaps we should have to deplore the disorders of a dangerous woman, transferring her passions to paper in characters of fire.

'Chateubriand, speaking of St. Jerome, has said with profound truth: *That soul of fire required Rome or the desert.* To how many souls might not the sentiment of the illustrious poet be applied? What would the great heart of St. Bernard have done with its sensibility, if it had not found an immense pabulum in Divine things? On what would that inexhaustible activity which attended to the various occupations of a religious and the counsellor of kings and popes, who stood at the head of a European movement which raised the West against the East, have fed, if from his first years it had not had an infinite object—God?

'All men are not like St. Jerome and St. Bernard, but all require to be occupied and to love. If not well, they will be badly occupied; idleness is generally nothing more than the practice of vice. If good be not loved, evil will. If our hearts burn not with the flame that purifies, they will burn with the flame that defiles.'[1]

[1] Balmez, 'Letters to a Sceptic,' xxiv.

CONCLUSION.

1. Review of the commandments on which Christ commented and which He more fully explained.
2. Each commandment is a great favour and blessing granted by God to man.
3. Religion and the Decalogue essential to society. Nothing can replace the Decalogue.
4. Concluding reflections with regard to the inward conscience in the words of the eminent Spanish priest and philosopher, Rev. J. Balmez.

1. WE have now arrived at the end of the Decalogue, of that law first impressed in indelible characters by God on the heart of man, and afterwards engraved on tables of stone and solemnly promulgated on Mount Sinai, and finally renewed, perfected and inscribed in the book of the Gospels by our Divine Saviour, the Light and the Wisdom of God. To impress more fully upon our minds the sanction given to this law by Christ, let us review once more the commandments on which He commented, and which He more fully explained:

The Second Commandment.—In the Sermon on the Mount: *But I say to you not to swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your speech be yea, yea; no, no; and that which is over and above these is of evil.*[1]

[1] St. Matt. v. 34-37.

The Third Commandment.—In reply to the Pharisees, who found fault with His disciples for plucking corn on the Sabbath day : *And He said to them : The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath also.*[1]

The Fourth Commandment.—For Moses said: Honour thy father and thy mother ; and he that shall curse father or mother, dying let him die. But you say : If a man shall say to his father or mother, Corban (which is a gift) whatsoever is from me, shall profit thee. And farther you suffer him not to do anything for his father and mother, making void the word of God by your own tradition which you have given forth.[2]

The Fifth Commandment.—You have heard that it was said to them of old : Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca ! shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool ! shall be in danger of hell fire.[3]

The Sixth Commandment.—But I say to you, that whosoever shall look upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.[4]

The explanations and instructions I have given on the various commandments are, I know, far from being perfect. Nevertheless, they may serve to make us sensible of two conclusions which are quoted by the Abbé P D. Hauterive from Mgr. Gousset.

2. The first is that each commandment is a favour and blessing granted by God, and a gratuitous blessing. Even though men should tyrannize over one another, and hate each other, and gorge themselves and ravish the honour,

[1] St. Mark ii. 27, 28.
[2] *Ibid.* vii. 10-13
[3] St. Matt. v. 21, 22.
[4] *Ibid.* v. 28.

the fortune, and the reputation of their fellow creatures, God would not be less happy in Himself because His felicity is as essential as His being, and does not depend upon us. But he has taken up our cause. He wishes to protect our interests, ourselves, and those dear to us. He has interpreted in our favour by His all-powerful authority, and He has said to the wicked: 'Whatever you do to the least of My children I shall regard as done to Myself. If you escape human laws, you shall not escape from My justice.' There is security in this promise, the guarantee of order, of justice, of loyalty, of charity, and of peace amongst men.

3. The second conclusion which our explanation of the Decalogue may have rendered sensible and clear is that they are truly blind who dare to say that religion is only an outwork in society, accidental to it its well-being; that whether it be practised or not, the affairs of the world would be neither better nor worse. Unreflecting men, who enjoy the blessings of Christianity without knowing the cause, try to suppress the Decalogue, and will not see that religion is not an outwork or an accident in the social life. Take away the Decalogue, and God will be only a name to be abused with impunity; and then all the passions will be let loose, and everything will be thrown into confusion. Take away the Decalogue, and there will no longer be any foundation for the family: the woman will be enslaved, the child a victim, and the father an inconstant despot. Take away the Decalogue, and society itself cannot exist. Force or power will be the supreme law. You will have despotism, slavery and anarchy; and neither your life, your honour, or that of your wives or children, nor your possessions, nor your reputation, can be saved from the assassin, the corrupter of morals, the thief, and the slanderer.

Neither can you say that you will replace the Decalogue.

With what? You may say that you will replace it by instruction. But, it may be answered, are we wanting in instruction nowadays? It is said that one can learn as much in four years now as he could long ago in twenty years. Our age is called the enlightened age; and nevertheless, if facts prove anything, that thing is, that instruction without religion is calculated in a given time to destroy the moral life of the world more than anything else. The ancient Greeks and Romans were not wanting in instruction and education, and they were never more corrupted than when they were at the height of their civilization and education; their greatest luminaries were ruined by the indulgence of their passions and the immorality of their lives. Instruction gives ideas; it does not give virtue: it may make men wise; it cannot without religion ever make them good citizens.

Others may say that they will replace the Decalogue by systems of political philosophy. We may answer that some of the systems of philosophy are very beautiful, but what sanction do they receive? We have had many saving and healing philosophical systems for the last eighty years, and what social evil have they remedied? what power have they exercised towards rendering obedience more exact, devotedness more faithful, society more moral and tranquil? what people have they helped to save?

Others, again, may suggest as a substitute for the Decalogue new constitutions and new charters, but in this respect it would seem that there is not much left for us to desire. Since 1789 some countries, like France, have been reconstituted a score of times, and society has been subjected to every treatment, and yet the evils remain, and it becomes more agitated, more exhausted, and more en feebled.

Some others suggest as a substitute for the Decalogue

human legislation ; but if laws without religion could remedy the evils of a people, or strengthen the social order, verily we should be the most perfect, the most moral, the most tranquil, and the happiest of all people, past, present, and future: for we do not lack laws ; we have a large and a sufficient collection of them.

We must therefore acknowledge that the Decalogue alone can save society, and preserve it from the many dangers that threaten it. The reason of this is clear: Religion, of which the Decalogue is an essential part, can alone reach the human heart. Now, it is in the human heart we find the source of all evil ; all comes from it. All legislation that does not reach the heart of a man is impotent legislation. Love, then, the Decalogue ; observe it with fidelity if you wish to see it observed by others. This will be our peace and our happiness. We may say both to the individual and to society, *Hoc fac, et vives.* (Do this, and thou shalt live.[1])

4. Again adverting to the inward acts of the mind, I may conclude with the reflection conveyed to us in the words of the Spanish priest and philosopher already referred to :

'As regards the point whether God can be indignant at the interior acts of the creature, we might say: What ! if revelations exist between God and man, if the Creator has not abandoned His creature, if He regards it yet as an object of care, is it not clear, is it not evident, that the understanding and the will—that is, what is most precious in man ; what renders him capable of knowing and loving his Maker ; what raises him above the brute ; what constitutes him king of creation—is not that, we repeat, what should be regarded as the object of the solicitude of the Supreme Ruler, and should we not feel certain He does not attend to exterior acts, but inasmuch as they come from the

[1] Luke x. 28.

sanctuary of the conscience, where He delights to be known, loved, and adored? What is man if we prescind from his interior? what is morality if not applied to the understanding and will? Is that doctrine well founded which mercilessly destroys what is most independent and dignified in man, whilst it boasts of being instinct with the sentiments of morality?

'Be persuaded that there is no truth or dignity in anything that opposes religion, and what appears at first sight noble and generous is base and degrading. And, apropos of philanthropic sentiments, beware of those sudden inspirations which may appear to you decisive arguments, but which, when examined by the light of religion, or even sound philosophy, are nothing but unfounded reasoning or conclusions from unsound principles, conducing to establish the dominion of matter over spirit, and to let loose the voluptuous passions of the world.'[1]

[1] Balmez Letters, Letter XII., 'The Moral Code.'

THE END.

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